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When I consider thy Heavens the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained. Lord what is Man that thou art mindful of him, and the Son of Man that thou visitest him. Psalm VIII, v. 3 & 4.

Printed for John Rivington and Partners.

MEDITATIONS AND CONTEMPLATIONS.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

CONTAINING,

VOL. I.

MEDITATIONS among the TOMBS;

REFLECTIONS on a FLOWER-GARDEN;

And, A DESCANT on CREATION.

VOL. II.

CONTEMPLATIONS on the NIGHT;

CONTEMPLATIONS on the STARRY HEAVENS; And,

A WINTER-PIECE.

By JAMES HERVEY, A.M.
Late Rector of *Weston-Favell*, in *Northamptonshire*.

THE NINETEENTH EDITION.

VOL. II.

LONDON:

Printed for JOHN and FRANCIS RIVINGTON, W. STRAHAN, L. HAWES and W. CLARKE and R. COLLINS, W. JOHNSTON, T. CASLON, G. KEITH, B. LAW, E. and C. DILLY, G. KEARSLY, W. GRIFFIN, J. FULLER, jun. J. COOTE, T. BECKET, J. KNOX, and R. BALDWIN.

MDCCLXX.

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The FRONTISPIECE.

Exhibits a View of the nocturnal Heavens.—On the Top of an OBSERVATORY, two Perſons examine the celeſtial Bodies with their Teleſcopes: Inſtruments, which gave Riſe to the moſt important Improvements in the Science of *Aſtronomy*.

An aged Philoſopher is repreſented, inſtructing his Pupils. He deſcribes, with his Compaſſes, the Order and Courſes of the Planets; according to the *Newtonian* Hypotheſis, intimated by a Book bearing that great Author's Name.—The whole Tenour of the Lecture, in Concert with the whole Structure and Œconomy of the Skies, ENARRANT GLORIAM DEI, profeſſedly *declare the Glory of GOD.*—Behind the Philoſopher ſtands one of his Scholars, with an Air of cloſe Attention, computing on his Fingers the Diſtances, the Magnitudes, the Velocities of the planetary Orbs.—Another at his Right-hand, attending to the Deſcription of the ſtupendous Syſtem, is ſtruck with Surprize, and impreſſed with Awe.—A third, with conſcious Humiliation in his Countenance, holds a Scroll, inſcribed with a Dia-

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gram; expreſſing the joint Action of the *centrifugal* and *centripetal* Forces. As by the one, the Planets are continually endeavouring to fly off; but by the other, are perpetually drawn towards the Centre of their Motion; SIC GRATIA DEI, *Such is the Operation of Divine Grace:* correcting the irregular Impulſe of our natural Depravity; determining our Deſires to the Centre of Happineſs; and directing our Goings in the Circle of Duty.—A Youth on the Left, overwhelmed with Veneration for the Almighty Maker, in a Tranſport of Gratitude, and a Poſture of Adoration, pours out his Soul in thoſe emphatical Words; *When I conſider thy Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou haſt ordained:*—LORD, *what is Man, that thou art mindful of him; and the Son of Man, that thou viſiteſt him?* Pſal. viii. 3, 4.

TO

TO

PAUL ORCHARD,

OF

Stoke-Abbey, in *Devonſhire*, Eſq;

Dear SIR,

AS your honoured Father was pleaſed to make choice of me, to anſwer in your Name at the Font, and to exerciſe a ſort of *Guardianſhip* over your ſpiritual Intereſts; permit me, by putting theſe little Treatiſes into your Hand, to fulfil ſome Part of that ſolemn Obligation.

GRATITUDE for many ſignal Favours, and a conſcientious Regard

to my ſacred Engagement, have long ago inſpired my Breaſt with the warmeſt Wiſhes, both for your true *Dignity*, and real *Happineſs*. Nor can I think of a more endearing, or a more effectual Way, of advancing either the one or the other, than to ſet before you a Sketch of your excellent *Father*'s Character.—Illuſtrious Examples are the moſt winning Incitements to Virtue. And none can come attended with ſuch particular Recommendations to YOU, Sir, as the Pattern of that worthy Perſon, from whom you derive your very Being.

A MOST cordial and reverential Eſteem for the *Divine Word*, was one of his remarkable Qualities. Thoſe Oracles of Heaven were his principal Delight, and his inſeparable Companions. Your Gardens, your ſolitary Walks, and the Hedges of your Fields can witneſs*, with what an unwearied Aſſiduity He exerciſed Himſelf in the Law

* Joſh. xxiv. 27.

Law of the LORD. From hence He fetched his Maxims of Wiſdom, and formed his Judgment of Things. The ſacred *Precepts*, were the Model of his Temper, and the Guide of his Life; while the precious *Promiſes*, were the Joy of his Heart, and his Portion for ever.

IMPROVING Company was another of his moſt reliſhing Pleaſures. Few Gentlemen were better furniſhed, either with Richneſs of Fancy, or Copiouſneſs of Expreſſion, to bear a ſhining Part in Converſation. With theſe Talents, He always endeavoured to give ſome *uſeful*, generally ſome *religious*, Turn to the Diſcourſe. Nor did he ever reflect, with greater Complacency, on his ſocial Hours, than when they tended to glorify the Eternal Majeſty; and to awaken, in Himſelf and others, a more lively Spirit of Devotion.

To project for the Good of Others, was his frequent *Study*, and to carry

thoſe benevolent Contrivances into Execution, his favourite *Employ*. When viſited by the young Perſons of the Nighbourhood, far from taking an ungraceful Pride to initiate them in Debauchery, or confirm them in a riotous Habit; it was his inceſſant Aim, by finely-adapted Perſuaſives, to encourage them in *Induſtry*, and eſtabliſh them in a Courſe of *Sobriety*; to *guard* them againſt the Allurements of Vice, and *animate* them with the Principles of Piety. A noble Kind of Hoſpitality this! Which will probably tranſmit it's beneficial Influence, to their earthly Poſſeſſions; to their future Families; and even to their everlaſting State.

A Conviction of human Indigence, and a thorough Perſuaſion of the Divine All-ſufficiency, induced him to be *frequent in Prayer*. To proſtrate himſelf, in profound Adoration, before that infinitely exalted Being, who dwells in Light inacceſſible,

ſible, was *his Glory*; to implore the Continuance of the Almighty Favour, and the Increaſe of all Chriſtian Graces, was *his Gain*. In thoſe Moments, no doubt, he remembered YOU, Sir, with a particular Earneſtneſs; and lodged many an ardent Petition in the Court of Heaven, for his Infant Son. Ceaſe not to ſecond them with your own devout Supplications, that they may deſcend upon your Head, "in the "Fulneſs of the Bleſſings of the Goſ-"pel of Peace."

To give their genuine Luſtre to all his other Endownments, he was careful to maintain an *humble Mind*. Though his Friends might admire his ſuperior Abilities, or his Acquaintance applaud his exemplary Behaviour, he ſaw how far he *fell ſhort* of the Mark of his high Calling: ſaw, and lamented his Defects: ſaw, and renounced Himſelf: relying, for final Acceptance, and endleſs Felicity, on a *better Righteouſneſs* than his own; even

even on the tranſcendently perfect Righteouſneſs, and inconceivably precious Death, of JESUS the Redeemer. This was the Rock of his Hope, and the very Crown of his Rejoicing.

THESE, Sir, are ſome of the *diſtinguiſhing* Characteriſtics of your deceaſed Parent. As you had the Misfortune to loſe ſo valuable a Relative, before you was capable of forming any Acquaintance with his Perſon; I flatter myſelf, you will the more attentively obſerve his Picture. This His *moral Picture*; deſigned, not to be ſet in Gold, or ſparkle in Enamel, but to breathe in your Spirit, and to live in all your Conduct.—Which, though it be intirely your own, calculated purely for yourſelf, may poſſibly (like the Family Pieces in your Parlour, that glance an Eye upon as many as enter the Room) make ſome *pleaſing* and *uſeful* Impreſſion on

on every Beholder.—May every one, charmed with the beautiful Image, catch it's Reſemblance; and Each, in his reſpective Sphere, "go and do "likewiſe."

BUT You, Sir, are peculiarly concerned to copy the amiable Original. As the Order of an indulgent Providence, has made you Heir of the *affluent Circumſtances*; let not a gay and thoughtleſs Inadvertence, cut you off from the *richer Inheritance*, of theſe noble Qualifications.—Theſe will be your Security, amidſt all the glittering Dangers; which are inſeparable from blooming Years, and an elevated Situation in Life. Theſe are your Path, your ſure and only Path, to true Greatneſs, and ſolid Happineſs.—Tread in theſe Steps, and you cannot fail to be the Darling of your Friends, and the Favourite of Heaven. Tread in theſe Steps, and you will give inexpreſſible Joy to one of the beſt of Mothers;

you

you will become an extenſive Bleſſing to your Fellow-Creatures; and which, after ſuch moſt engaging Motives, is ſcarce worthy to be mentioned, you will be the Delight, the Honour, and the Boaſt of,

Dear SIR,

Your very affectionate Godfather,

And moſt faithful humble Servant,

Weſton-Favell, *near* Northampton, July 14, 1747.

JAMES HERVEY.

PREFACE.

WE *have already exercised our Speculations, on the Tombs and Flowers; surveying Nature, covered with the deepest Horrors, and arrayed in the richest Beauties.* Allegory *taught many of the Objects, to speak the Language of Virtue; while* Imagination *lent her Colouring, to give the Lessons an engaging Air.—And this with a View of imitating that* Divine *Instructor; who commissioned the* Lily *, in her silver Suit, to remonstrate in the Ear of unbelieving Reason: Who sent his Disciples (Men ordained to* teach *the Universe) to* learn *Maxims of the last Importance, from the most* insignificant *Birds *, that wander through the Paths of the Air; from the very*

* Matt. vi. 26, 28, 29, 30.

very meaneſt *Herbs* *, *that are ſcattered over the Face of the* † *Ground.*

Emboldened by the kind Acceptance of the preceding Sketches, I beg leave to confide in the ſame Benevolence *of* Taſte, *for the Protection and Support of the two remaining Eſſays; which exhibit a Proſpect of* ſtill Life, *and* grand Operation: *which moralize on the moſt compoſed, and moſt magnificent, Appearances of Things.—In which,* Fancy *is again ſuffered to introduce her Imagery; but only as the Handmaid of* Truth:

* Matt. vi. 26, 28, 29, 30.

† Celebrated Writers, as *Demoſthenes* and *Cicero*, *Thucydides* and *Livy*, are obſerved to have a Stile peculiar to themſelves.—Now, whoever conſiders the Diſcourſes of *Chriſt*, will find Him diſtinguiſhing Himſelf by a Stile, which may properly be called *HIS OWN*. Majeſtic, yet familiar; happily uniting Dignity with Condeſcenſion; it conſiſts, in teaching his Followers the *ſublimeſt* Truths, by ſpiritualizing on the moſt *common* Occurrences. Which, beſides it's being level to the loweſt Apprehenſions: and admirably adapted to ſteal into the moſt inattentive Heart; is accompanied with this very ſingular Advantage, That it turns even the *Sphere of Buſineſs* into a *School of Inſtruction*; and renders the moſt ordinary Objects a Set of Monitors, ever ſoliciting our Regard, becauſe ever preſent to our Senſes.—So that, I believe, it may be ſaid of this *amiable Method*, in which our LORD conveyed; as well

Truth: *in order to dreſs her Perſon, and diſplay her Charms; to engage the Attention, and win the Love, even of the* Gay, *and of the* Faſhionable. *Which is more likely to be effected, by forming agreeable Pictures of Nature, and deriving inſtructive Obſervations; than by the laborious Method of long-deduced Arguments, or cloſe-connected Reaſonings.—The Contemplation of the Heavens and the Earth, of their admirable Properties and beneficial Changes, has always afforded the moſt exalted Gratification to the human Mind. In Compliance with this prevailing Taſte, I have drawn my ſerious*

well as of that *powerful Energy*, which attended his Doctrines, That *never Man ſpake like this Man.*—The *Harveſt* approaching, He reminds his Diſciples of a far more important Harveſt, *John* iv. 35. *Matt.* xiii. 39. when immortal Beings ſhall be *reaped* from the Grave, and *gathered in* from all the Quarters of the Earth: when every human Creature ſhall ſuſtain the Character of valuable *Wheat*, or deſpicable *Tares*; and accordingly be lodged in Manſions of everlaſting Security, or conſigned over to the Rage of unquenchable Fire.—In his Charge to *Fiſhermen*, when they are commencing Preachers, *Matt.* iv. 19. He exhorts them, conformably to the Nature of their late Occupation, to uſe the ſame *Aſſiduity* and *Addreſs* in winning Souls, as they were wont to exerciſe in catching the finny Prey.—For the farther Illuſtration of this no leſs uſeful, than curious Subject, I would refer my Reader to a valuable Note, in Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s Obſervations on the Prophecies; p. 148. 4to Edition.

rious Admonitions from the ſtupendous Theatre, and variegated Scenery, of the Univerſe. That the Reader may learn his Duty, from his very Pleaſures—may gather Wiſdom, *mingled with* Virtue, *from the moſt refined* Entertainments, *and nobleſt* Delights.

The Evening, *drawing her Sables over the World, and gently darkening into* Night, *is a Seaſon peculiarly proper for ſedate Conſideration. All Circumſtances concur, to huſh our Paſſions, and ſooth our Cares; to tempt our Steps abroad, and prompt our Thoughts to ſerious Reflection.*

——— Then is the Time,
For thoſe, whom Wiſdom, and whom Nature charm,
To ſteal themſelves from the degen'rate Croud,
And ſoar above this little Scene of Things;
To tread low-thoughted Vice beneath their Feet;
To ſooth the throbbing Paſſions into Peace;
And woo lone Quiet in her ſilent Walks *.

The Favour I would ſolicit for the firſt *of the following Compoſitions, is, That it may be permitted*

* Thoms. Autumn, l. 973. laſt Edit.

permitted to attend, in ſuch retired and contemplative Excurſions. To attend, if not under the Character of a Friend; at leaſt, in the humble Capacity of a Servant, or a Page:—as a Servant, *to open the Door of Meditation, and remove every Impediment to thoſe beſt Exerciſes of the Mind; which blend Advantage with Amuſement, and improve, while they delight:—as a* Page, *to gather up the unſtable, fluctuating Train of Fancy; and collect her fickle Powers into a conſiſtent, regular, and uſeful Habit of Thinking.*

The other, *converſant among the* ſtarry Regions, *would lead the Imagination through thoſe beautiful Tracts of unclouded Azure; and point out to the Judgment ſome of thoſe aſtoniſhing Particulars, which ſo eminently ſignalize the celeſtial Worlds. A Proſpect this, to which Curioſity attracts our Eyes, and to which Scripture itſelf often directs our Study. A Proſpect beyond all others moſt excellently calculated, to* inlarge *the Soul, and* enoble *it's Conceptions;—to give the grandeſt Apprehenſions of the* Everlaſting *GOD, and create Sentiments of becoming Superiority, with relation to all* tranſitory *Intereſt;—in a Word, to furniſh* Faith

with the ſureſt Foundation, for a ſteady Affiance, and true Magnanimity of Spirit; to afford Piety *the ſtrongeſt Motives, both for a lively Gratitude, and profound Veneration.*

While Galilæo *lifts his Tube, and diſcovers the prodigious Magnitude of thoſe radiant Orbs;—while* Newton *meaſures their amazing Diſtances, and unites the whole Syſtem, in harmonious Order, by the ſubtle Influences of Attraction:—I would only, like the Herald before that illuſtrious* Hebrew *, *proclaim at every Turn,* "Bow the Knee, *and* "*adore the Almighty Maker; magnify his* "*eternal Name,* and make his Praiſe, *like all* "*his Works,* to be glorious."

* Gen. xli. 43.

CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

NIGHT.

Night *is fair* Virtue's *immemorial Friend:*
The conſcious Moon, *through ev'ry diſtant Age,*
Has held a Lamp to Wiſdom.

Night-Thoughts, N° V.

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CON-

CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

NIGHT.

THE Buſineſs of the Day diſpatched, and the ſultry Heats abated, invited me to the Recreation of a Walk. A Walk in one of the *fineſt Receſſes* of the Country; and in one of the moſt *pleaſant Evenings*, which the Summer-Seaſon produced.

THE Limes and Elms, uniting their Branches over my Head, formed a *verdant Canopy*, and caſt a moſt refreſhing Shade. Under my Feet lay a *Carpet* of Nature's *Velvet*; Graſs intermingled with Moſs, and embroidered with Flowers. Jeſſamines, in Conjunction with Woodbines, twined around the Trees; diſplaying their *artleſs Beauties* to the Eye, and diſ-

fuſing their *delicious Sweets* through the Air. On either Side, the Boughs, rounded into a Set of regular Arches, opened a View into the *diſtant Fields*, and preſented me with a Proſpect of the *bending Skies*. The little Birds, all joyous and grateful for the Favours of the Light, were paying their Acknowledgments in a *Tribute* of *Harmony*, and ſoothing themſelves to Reſt with Songs. While a French-Horn, from a neighbouring Seat, ſent it's melodious Accents, ſoftened by the Length of their Paſſage, to complete the *Concert* of the *Grove*.

ROVING in this agreeable Manner, my Thoughts were exerciſed on a Subject, ſtill more agreeable than the Seaſon, or the Scene. I mean, our late *ſignal Victory*, over the united Forces of inteſtine Treaſon, and foreign Invaſion. A Victory, which pours Joy through the preſent Age, and will tranſmit it's Influence to Generations yet unborn.—Are not all the Bleſſings, which can endear Society, or render Life itſelf deſirable, centered in our preſent happy Conſtitution, and auſpicious Government? Were they not *all* ſtruck at, by that impious and horrid Blow, meditated at *Rome*; levelled by *France*; and ſeconded by factious Spirits at *Home?* Who then can be ſufficiently thankful, for the gracious Interpoſition of Providence; which has not only averted the impending

impending Ruin, but turned it, with aggravated Confuſion, on the Authors of our Troubles?

METHINKS, every Thing *valuable*, which I poſſeſs; every Thing *charming*, which I behold; conſpire to enhance this ever-memorable Event. To this it is owing, that I can ramble unmoleſted along the Vale of private Life, and taſte all the innocent Satisfaction of a *contemplative* Retirement.—Had Rebellion * ſucceeded in her deteſtable Deſigns; inſtead of walking with Security and Complacence in theſe flowery Paths, I might have met the *Aſſaſſin* with his *Dagger:* or have been obliged to abandon my Habitation, and "embrace the Rock for a Shelter."—Farewel then, ye fragrant Shades; Seats of Meditation, and calm Repoſe! I ſhould have been driven from your loved Retreats, to make Way for ſome barbarous, ſome *inſulting Victor*.—Farewel then, ye pleaſing Toils, and wholſome Amuſements of my rural Hours! I ſhould no more have reared the tender Flower to the Sun; no more have taught the Eſpalier to expand her Boughs; nor have fetched, any longer, from my Kitchen-Garden, the pureſt Supplies of Health.

HAD Rebellion ſucceeded in her deteſtable Deſigns; inſtead of being regaled with the *Muſic*

* Referring to the Rebellion, ſet on Foot in the Year 1745.—Which, for ſeveral Months, made a very alarming Progreſs in the North—but was happily extinguiſhed by the glorious and deciſive Victory at *Culloden*.

of the *Woods*, I might have been alarmed with the Sound of the Trumpet, and all the Thunder of War. Inſtead of being entertained with this *beautiful Landſcape*, I might have beheld our Houſes ranſacked, and our Villages plundered; I might have beheld our fenced Cities encompaſſed with Armies, and our fruitful Fields "cloathed with Deſolation;" or have been ſhocked with the more frightful Images, of "Garments rolled in Blood," and of a Ruffian's Blade reeking from a Brother's Heart. Inſtead of Peace, with her chearing Olives, ſheltering our Abodes; inſtead of Juſtice, with her impartial Scale, ſecuring our Goods; *Perſecution* had brandiſhed her Sword, and *Slavery* clanked her Chains.

Nor are theſe Miſeries imaginary only, or the Creatures of a groundleſs Panic. There are, in a neighbouring Kingdom, who very lately experienced them in all their Rigour *. And, if the *malignant* Spirit of *Popery*, had forced itſelf into our Church; if an *abjured Pretender*, had cut his Way to our Throne; We could have no Reaſon

* See a Pamphlet intitled, *Popery always the ſame*.—Which contains a Narrative of the *Perſecutions*, and ſevere Hardſhips lately ſuffered by the *Proteſtants*, in the Southern Parts of *France*; and cloſes with a moſt ſeaſonable, alarming, and ſpirited Addreſs to the Inhabitants of *Great-Britain*. Printed 1746. Price 8*d*.

Reaſon to expect a Mitigation of their Severity, on our Behalf.—But, ſuppoſing the tender Mercies of a bigotted Uſurper, to have been ſomewhat leſs cruel. Where, alas! would have been the Encouragement, to cultivate our little Portion; or what Pleaſure could ariſe, from an improved Spot; if both the one and the other lay, every Moment, at the Mercy of *lawleſs* Power? This imbittering Circumſtance would ſpoil their Reliſh; and by rendering them a *precarious*, would render them a *joyleſs* Acquiſition. —In vain, might the Vine ſpread her purple Cluſters; in vain, be laviſh of her generous Juices; if *Tyranny*, like a ravenous Harpy, ſhould be always hovering over the Bowl, and ready to ſnatch it from the Lip of Induſtry, or to wreſt it from the Hand of Liberty.

LIBERTY, that deareſt of Names; and *Property*, that beſt of Charters; give an additional, an inexpreſſible Charm, to every delightful Object.—See, how the declining Sun has beautified the *weſtern Clouds*; has arrayed them in Crimſon, and ſkirted them with Gold. Such a Refinement of our domeſtic Bliſs, is Property; ſuch an Improvement of our public Privileges, is Liberty.—When the Lamp of Day ſhall withdraw his Beams, there will ſtill remain the ſame Collection of floating Vapours; but O! how changed, how gloomy! The Carnation-Streaks

are faded; the golden Edgings are wore away; and all the lovely Tinges are loſt, in a *leaden-coloured louring* Sadneſs. *Such* would be the Aſpect, of all theſe Scenes of Beauty, and all theſe Abodes of Pleaſure; if expoſed continually to the Caprice of arbitrary Sway, or held in a State of abject and cringing Dependence.

THE Sun has almoſt finiſhed his daily Race, and haſtens to the Goal. He deſcends lower and lower; till his Chariot-wheels ſeem to hover on the utmoſt Verge of the Sky. What is ſomewhat remarkable, the Orb of Light, upon the Point of ſetting, grows conſiderably *broader*. The Shadows of Objects, juſt before they become blended in undiſtinguiſhable Darkneſs, are exceedingly *lengthened* *.—Like Bleſſings, little prized, while *poſſeſſed:* but highly eſteemed, the very Inſtant they are preparing for their Flight: bitterly regretted, when once they are gone, and to be ſeen no more.

THE radiant Globe is, now, half-immerſed beneath the duſky Earth. Or, as the ancient Poets ſpeak, is ſhooting into the Ocean, and ſinks in the weſtern Sea.—And could I view the *Sea*, at this Juncture, it would yield a moſt amuſing and curious Spectacle. The Rays, ſtriking horizontally on the liquid Element, give it the Appearance of floating Glaſs; or, reflected in many a dif-

* *Majoreſque cadunt altis de Montibus Umbræ.*
VIRG.

a different Direction, form a beautiful Multiplicity of Colours.—A Stranger, as he walks along the ſandy Beach; and, loſt in penſive Attention, liſtens to the Murmurings of the reſtleſs Flood; is agreeably alarmed by the *gay Decorations* of the Surface. With Entertainment, and with Wonder, he ſees the curling Waves, here gliſtering with White, there glowing with Purple; in one Place, wearing an azure Tincture; in another, glancing a Caſt of undulating Green; in the Whole, exhibiting a Piece of *fluid Scenery*, that may vie with yonder penſil Tapeſtries, though wrought in the Loom, and tinged with the Dyes of Heaven.

WHILE I am tranſported by Fancy to the Shores of the Ocean, the great Luminary is ſunk beneath the Horizon, and totally diſappears. The whole Face of the Ground is overſpread with Shades; or with, what one of the fineſt Painters of Nature calls, a *dun Obſcurity*. Only a few very ſuperior Eminences are tipt with ſtreaming Silver. The Tops of Groves, and lofty Towers, catch the *laſt Smiles* of Day *; are ſtill irradiated by the departing Beams.—But,

* See this remarkable Appearance delicately deſcribed, and wrought into a Compariſon, which, in my Opinion, is one of the moſt juſt, beautiful, and noble Pieces of Imagery, to be found in modern Poetry; *Night-Thoughts*, N° II. p. 42. 4to Edit.

O! how tranſient is the Diſtinction! how momentary the Gift! Like all the Bleſſings which Mortals enjoy below, it is *gone*, almoſt as ſoon as *granted*. See! how languiſhingly it trembles on the leafy Spire; and glimmers, with a dying Faintneſs, on the Mountain's Brow. The little Vivacity, that remains, decays every Moment. It can no longer hold it's Station. While I ſpeak, it expires; and reſigns the World to the gradual Approaches of Night.

——— *Now* Twilight *grey*
Has in her ſober Liv'ry all Things clad *.

EVERY Object, a little while ago, glared with Light; but now, All appears under a more qualified Luſtre. The Animals harmonize with the inſenſible Creation; and what was *gay* in thoſe, as well as *glittering* in this, gives place to an univerſal *Gravity*. In the Meadows, all was jocund and ſportive: but now the gameſome Lambs, are grown weary of their Frolicks; and the tired Shepherd, has impoſed Silence on his Pipe. In the Branches, all was Sprightlineſs and Song: but now the lively Green, is wrapt in the deſcending Glooms; and no tuneful Airs are heard, only the plaintive Stock-dove, cooing mournfully through the Grove.—Should I now be vain and trifling, the Heavens and the Earth would rebuke my unſeaſonable Levity. Therefore,

* MILT. *Par. Loſt.* B. IV. l. 598.

fore, be theſe Moments devoted to Thoughts, *ſedate*, as the cloſing Day; *ſolemn*, as the Face of Things. And, indeed, however my ſocial Hours are enlivened with innocent Pleaſantry; let every Evening, in her ſable Habit, toll the Bell to ſerious Conſideration. Nothing can be more proper, for a Perſon who walks on the Borders of Eternity, and is haſting continually to his final Audit; nothing more proper, than daily to ſlip away from the Circle of Amuſements, and frequently to relinquiſh the Hurry of Buſineſs, in order to conſider and adjuſt "the Things that "belong to his Peace."

SINCE the Sun is departed, from whence can it proceed, that I am not involved in pitchy Darkneſs? Whence theſe Remainders of *diminiſhed Brightneſs?* Which, though ſcarcely forming a Refulgence, ſoften and ſooth the Horrors of Night. I ſee not the ſhining Ruler, yet am cheared with a real, though faint Communication of his Splendor.—Does he remember Us, in his Progreſs through other Climes? Does He ſend a *Detachment* of his Rays, to *eſcort* us during his perſonal Abſence; or to *cover* (if I may uſe the military Term) our *Retreat* from the Scene of Action? Has he bequeathed Us a Dividend of his Beams, ſufficient to render our Circumſtances eaſy, and our Situation agreeable? Till Sleep pours it's ſoft Oppreſſion on the Organs of Senſe; till

till Sleep ſuſpends all the Operations of our Hands; and intirely ſuperſedes any farther Occaſion for the Light.

No: it is ill-judged and unreaſonable, to aſcribe this beneficent Conduct to the Sun. Not unto Him; not unto Him; but unto his *Almighty Maker* We are obliged, for this pleaſing Attendant, this valuable Legacy. The gracious Author of our Being, has ſo diſpoſed the Collection of circumambient Air, as to make it productive of this fine and wonderful Effect. The Sunbeams, falling on the higher Parts of the aëreal Fluid, inſtead of paſſing on in ſtrait Lines, are bent inwards and conducted to our Sight. Their natural Courſe is over-ruled, and they are bidden to wheel about; on purpoſe to favour Us with a welcome and ſalutary Viſit.—By which means, the Bleſſing of Light, and the Seaſon of Buſineſs are conſiderably prolonged. And, what is a very endearing Circumſtance, prolonged moſt conſiderably; when the vehement Heats of Summer, incline the *Student* to poſtpone his Walk, till the temperate Evening prevails; when the important Labours of the Harveſt, call the *Huſbandman* abroad, before the Day is fully riſen.

After all the Ardors of the ſultry Day, how reviving is this *Coolneſs!*—This gives new Verdure to the fading Plants; new Vivacity to the

the withering Flowers; and a more exquisite Fragrance to their mingled Scents.—By this, the *Air* also receives a new Force, and is qualified to exert itself with greater Activity. Qualified to brace our Limbs; to heave our Lungs; and co-operate, with a brisker Impulse, in perpetuating the Circulation of our Blood.—This I might call the grand *Alembic* of Nature; which distils her most sovereign *Cordial*, the refreshing *Dews*. Incessant Heat, would rob Us of their beneficial Agency; and oblige them to evaporate, in imperceptible Exhalations. Turbulent Winds, or even the gentler Motions of *Aurora*'s Fan, would dissipate the rising Vapours, and not suffer them to form a Coalition. But, favoured by the Stilness, and condensed by the Coolness of the Night; they unite in pearly Drops, and create that *finely-tempered* Humidity, which chears the vegetable World, as Sleep exhilarates the animal.

NOT unlike to these, are the Advantages of *Solitude*. The World is a troubled Ocean; and who can erect stable Purposes, on it's fluctuating Waves? The World is a School of Wrong; and who does not feel Himself warping to it's pernicious Influences * ? On this Sea of Glass †, how insen-

* *Nunquam a turba mores, quos extuli, refero. Aliquid, ex eo quod compositi, turbatur: aliquid, ex his quæ fugavi, redit. Inimica est multorum conversatio.* SENEC.

† Rev. xv. 2.

inſenſibly we ſlide from our own Stedfaſtneſs! Some ſacred *Truth*, which was ſtruck in lively Characters on our Souls, is obſcured, if not obliterated. Some worthy *Reſolution*, which Heaven had wrought in our Breaſts, is ſhaken, if not overthrown. Some inticing *Vanity*, which we had ſolemnly renounced, again practiſes it's Wiles, and again captivates our Affections. How often has an unwary Glance, kindled a Fever of irregular Deſire in our Hearts? How often has a Word of Applauſe, dropt luſcious Poiſon into our Ears; or ſome diſreſpectful Expreſſion, raiſed a Guſt of Paſſion in our Boſoms? Our Innocence is of ſo *tender* a Conſtitution, that it ſuffers in the promiſcuous Croud. Our Purity is of ſo *delicate* a Complexion, that it ſcarce touches on the World, without contracting a Stain. We ſee, we hear, with Peril.

BUT here *Safety* dwells. Every meddling and intruſive Avocation is ſecluded. Silence holds the Door againſt the Striſe of Tongues, and all the Impertinencies of idle Converſation. The buſy Swarm of vain Images, and cajoling Temptations; which beſet Us, with a buzzing Importunity, amidſt the Gaieties of Life; are chaſed by theſe thickening Shades.—Here I may, without Diſturbance, commune with my own Heart; and learn that beſt of Sciences, to *know myſelf*. Here, the Soul may rally her diſſipated Powers, and Grace recover it's native Energy.—This is the

Oppor-

Opportunity, to rectify every evil Impreſſion; to expel the Poiſon, and guard againſt the Contagion, of corrupting Examples. This is the Place, where I may, with Advantage, apply myſelf to ſubdue the *Rebel within*; and be Maſter, not of a Sceptre, but of myſelf.—Throng then, ye Ambitious, the Levees of the Powerful; I will be punctual in my Aſſignations with Solitude. To a Mind intent upon it's own Improvement, Solitude has Charms incomparably more engaging, than the *Entertainments* preſented in the Theatre; or the *Honours* conferred in the Drawing-Room.

I SAID, Solitude.—Am I then *alone?*—'Tis true, my Acquaintance are at a Diſtance. I have ſtole away from Company, and am remote from all *human* Obſervation.—But that is an alarming Thought,

Millions of ſpiritual *Creatures walk the Earth,*
Unſeen, *both when we wake, and when we ſleep* *.

PERHAPS, there may be Numbers of thoſe *inviſible Beings*, patrolling this ſame Retreat; and joining with me, in contemplating the Creator's Works. Perhaps, thoſe *miniſtring Spirits* who rejoice at the Converſion of a Sinner, and hold up the Goings of the Righteous, may follow Us to

* MILT. *Par. Loſt*, B. IV. l. 677.

to the lonely Receſs; and, even in our moſt ſolitary Moments, be our conſtant *Attendants*.—What a pleaſing Awe is awakened, by ſuch a Reflection! How venerable it renders my retired Walks! I am ſtruck with Reverence, as under the Roof of ſome *ſacred Edifice*; or in the *Preſence-Chamber* of ſome mighty Monarch.—O! may I never bring any Pride of Imagination, nor indulge the leaſt diſſolute Affection; where ſuch refined and exalted Intelligences exerciſe their Watch!

'Tis poſſible, that I am encompaſſed with ſuch a Cloud of Witneſſes; but it is certain, that God, the *infinite eternal* God, is now and ever with me. The great Jehovah, before whom all the Angelic Armies bow their Heads, and veil their Faces, ſurrounds me; ſupports me; pervades me. "In Him I live, move, and have my Be-"ing."—The whole World is his auguſt Temple; and, in the moſt ſequeſtred Corner, I appear before his adorable Majeſty, no leſs than when I worſhip in his Houſe, or kneel at his Altar. In every Place, therefore, let me pay him the Homage of a Heart, cleanſed from Idols, and devoted to his Service. In every Circumſtance, let me feel no *Ambition*, but to *pleaſe* Him; nor covet any *Happineſs*, but to *enjoy* Him.

How ſublime is the Deſcription, and how ſtriking the Sentiment, in that noble Paſſage of

the Pſalms! *Whither ſhall I go from thy Spirit, or whither ſhall I flee from thy Preſence? If I climb up into* the Heights of *Heaven, Thou art there* inthroned in Light. *If I go down to the* Depths of the *Grave, Thou art there alſo* in thy Pavilion of Darkneſs. *If I retire* to the remoteſt Eaſtern Climes, *where the Morning firſt takes Wing: if*, ſwifter than the darting Ray, *I* paſs to the oppoſite Regions of the Weſt, and *remain in the uttermoſt Parts of the Sea* *: ſhall I, in *that* diſtant Situation, be beyond thy Reach; or by *this* ſudden Tranſition, eſcape thy Notice! So far from it; that could I, with one Glance of Thought, tranſport myſelf beyond all the Bounds of Creation; I ſhould ſtill be incircled with the Immenſity of thy Eſſence; or rather, ſtill be incloſed in the Hollow of thy Hand.—Awful yet delightful Truth! Let it be interwoven with every Thought! and become one with the very Conſciouſneſs of my Exiſtence! That I may continually *walk with GOD*; and conduct myſelf, in every Step of my Behaviour, "as *ſeeing* "*HIM that is inviſible.*"

THEY

* *Pſal.* cxxxix. 7, 8, 9. There is, I think, an additional Strength and Beauty in the Thought; if, with the learned Mr. *Mudge*, we ſuppoſe an *Antitheſis* between the Two Clauſes of the laſt Verſe, as there evidently is between thoſe of the preceding; and that they expreſs, in a poetical Stile, the Extremities of the *Eaſt* and the *Weſt*.

THEY are the happy Perſons; Felicity, true Felicity, is *all their own*; who live under an habitual Senſe of GOD's Omnipreſence, and a ſweet Perſuaſion of his ſpecial Love. If Dangers threaten, their impregnable Defence is at hand. Nothing can be ſo near to terrify, as their Almighty Guardian to ſecure them.—To Theſe, the Hours can never be *tedious*; and it is impoſſible, for them, to be *alone*. Do they ſtep aſide from the Occupations of animal Life? A more exalted Set of Employments engage their Attention. They addreſs themſelves, in all the various Acts of Devotion, to their heavenly Father, *who* now *ſees in ſecret, and will* hereafter *reward them openly*. They ſpread all their Wants, before his indulgent Eye; and diſburden all their Sorrows, into his compaſſionate Boſom.—Do they withdraw from human Society? They find themſelves under the more immediate Regards of their Maker. If they reſign the Satisfactions of ſocial Intercourſe; it is to cultivate a Correſpondence with the condeſcending DEITY, and taſte the Pleaſures of Divine Friendſhip.—What is ſuch a *State*, but the very Suburbs of Heaven? What is ſuch a *Conduct*, but an Antepaſt of eternal Bleſſedneſs?

NOW, my Soul, the Day is *ended*. The Hours are all fled. They are fled to the ſupreme,

Judge,

Judge, and have given in their Evidence. An Evidence, regiſtered in Heaven! and to be produced, at the great Audit.—Happy *They!* whoſe Improvement has kept Pace with the fleeting Minutes. Who have ſeized the important Fugitives; and engaged them in the Purſuit of *Wiſdom*, or devoted them to the Service of *Virtue*.

FUGITIVES indeed they are. Our Moments ſlip away ſilently and inſenſibly. The Thief ſteals not more unperceived from the pillaged Houſe. —And will the Runagates never ſtop? No: Where-ever we are, however employed, Time purſues his inceſſant Courſe. Though *we* are liſtleſs and dilatory; the great Meaſurer of our Days preſſes on; ſtill preſſes on, in his unwearied Career *; and whirls our Weeks, and Months, and Years away.—Is it not then ſurpriſingly ſtrange, to hear People complain of the *Tediouſneſs* of their Time, and how *heavy* it hangs upon their Hands? To ſee them contrive a Variety of amuſing Artifices, to accelerate it's Flight, and get rid of it's Burden?—Ah! thoughtleſs Mortals! Why need you urge the headlong Torrent? Your Days are ſwifter than a *Poſt*; which, carrying Diſpatches of the laſt Importance, with unremitted Speed ſcours the Road. They paſs away like the nimble *Ships*; which have the Wind in their Wings, and ſkim along the watry Plain. They haſten to their

 deſtined

* *Sed fugit interea, fugit irreparabile Tempus.* VIRG.

deſtined Period, with the Rapidity of an *Eagle*; which leaves the ſtormy Blaſt behind Her, while She cleaves the Air, and darts upon her Prey *.

Now the Day is gone, how *ſhort* it appears! When my fond Eye beheld it in *Perſpective*, it ſeemed a very conſiderable Space. Minutes, crouded upon Minutes; and Hours, ranged behind Hours; exhibited an extenſive Draught, and flattered me with a long Progreſſion of Pleaſures. But, upon a *retroſpective* View, how wonderfully is the Scene altered! The Landſchape, large and ſpacious, which a warm Fancy drew; brought to the Teſt of cool Experience, ſhrinks into a Span. Juſt as the Shores vaniſh, and Mountains dwindle to a Spot; when the Sailor, ſurrounded by Skies and Ocean, throws his laſt Look on his native Land.—How clearly do I now diſcover the Cheat! May it never impoſe upon my unwary Imagination again! I find, there is nothing abiding on this Side Eternity. A *long* Duration, in a State of *finite* Exiſtence, is mere Illuſion.

PERHAPS,

* *Job* ix. 25, 26. By theſe Three very expreſſive Images, the inſpired Poet repreſents the *unintermitted* and *rapid* Flight of Time. The Paſſage is illuſtrated with great Judgment, and equal Delicacy, in Dr. *Grey*'s moſt ingenious Abridgment of *Schultens*.—*Quæ tribus in elementis velociſſima, hic admirabili cum emphaſi congeruntur. In terris, nil pernicius curſore, & quidem læti quid ferente. Rapidius tamen adhuc undas, non ſecant, ſed ſupervolant, navigiola papyro contexta. Omnium rapidiſſime aërem grandibus alis permetitur aquila, præcipiti lapſu ruens in prædam.*

PERHAPS, the *Healthy*, and the *Gay*, may not readily credit the ſerious Truth; eſpecially from a young Pen, and new to it's Employ. Let us then refer ourſelves to the Deciſion of the *Antient*. Aſk ſome venerable old Perſon, who is juſt marching off the mortal Stage; *How many have been the Days of the Years of thy Life*?* It was a Monarch's Queſtion; and therefore can want no Recommendation, to the faſhionable World.—Obſerve, how he ſhakes his hoary Locks, and from a deep-felt Conviction replies; "*Fourſcore Years* have finiſhed their Rounds, "to furrow theſe Cheeks, and cloath this Head "in Snow. Such a Term may ſeem long and "large, to inconſiderate Youth. But O! how "ſhort, how ſcanty, to One that has made the "Experiment! *Short*, as a Gleam of tranſient "Sunſhine; *ſcanty*, as the Shadow that de-"parteth. Methinks, it was but Yeſterday, "that I exchanged my childiſh Sports, for "manly Exerciſes; and now, I am reſigning "them both, for the Sleep of Death. As ſoon "as we are *born*, we begin to draw to our "*End*; and how ſmall is the Interval, between "the Cradle and the Tomb!"—O! may we believe this Teſtimony of mature Age! May every Evening bring it, with clearer Evidence, to our Minds! And may we form ſuch an Eſti-

* Gen. xlvii. 8. *Heb. Bib.*

mate of the little Pittance, while it is upon the advancing Hand, as we ſhall certainly make, when the Sands are all run down!

LET me add one Reflection on the *Work* to be *done*, while this Shuttle is flying through the Loom *. A Work of no ſmall Difficulty, yet of the utmoſt Conſequence!—Haſt Thou not ſeen, haſt Thou not known, the Excellent of the Earth; who were living Images of their Maker! His *Divine Likeneſs* was transfuſed into their Hearts, and beamed forth in all their Conduct. Beamed forth in Meekneſs of Wiſdom, and Purity of Affection; in all the tender Offices of Love, and all the noble Efforts of Zeal. To be ſtampt with the ſame beautiful Signature, and to be Followers of them, as they were of CHRIST; *this*, *this* is thy *Buſineſs*. On the Accompliſhment of this, thy eternal All depends. And, will an Affair of ſuch unſpeakable Weight, admit of a Moment's Delay, or conſiſt with the leaſt Remiſſneſs?—Eſpecially, ſince much of thy appointed Time is already elapſed; and the Remainder is *all Uncertainty*, ſave only that it is in the very Act to fly.—Or ſuppoſe, thou hadſt made a Covenant with the Grave, and waſt aſſured of reaching the Age of *Methuſelah*; how ſoon would even ſuch a Leaſe expire!—Extend it,

* *My Days are ſwifter than a Weaver's Shuttle.* Job vii. 6.

it, if you pleaſe, ſtill farther; and let it be *co-exiſtent* with Nature itſelf. How inconſiderable is the Addition! For, yet a very little while, and the commiſſioned Archangel lifts up his Hand to Heaven, and ſwears by the Almighty Name, *That Time ſhall be no longer* *. Then, *abuſed* Opportunities, will never return; and *new* Opportunities, will never more be offered. Then, ſhould negligent Mortals wiſh—wiſh ever ſo paſſionately—for a few Hours—a few Moments only—to be thrown back from the opening Eternity; *Thouſands*

* This alludes to the Beginning of *Revelations* the xth; which, abſtracted from it's ſpiritual Meaning, and conſidered only as a ſtately *Piece* of *Machinery*, well deſerves our Attention; and, I will venture to ſay, has not it's Superior, perhaps not it's Equal, in any of the moſt celebrated Maſters of *Greece* and *Rome*.—All that is gloomy or beautiful in the Atmoſphere, all that is ſtriking or magnificent in every Element, is taken to heighten the Idea. Yet nothing is diſproportionate; but an uniform Air of ineffable Majeſty greatens, exalts, ennobles the Whole.—Be pleaſed to obſerve the *Aſpect* of this auguſt Perſonage. All the Brightneſs of the Sun, ſhines in his Countenance; and all the Rage of the Fire, burns in his Feet.—See his *Apparel*. The Clouds compoſe his Robe, and the Drapery of the Sky floats upon his Shoulders. The Rainbow forms his Diadem; and that which "compaſſeth the Hea-"ven with a glorious Circle," is the Ornament of his Head.—Behold his *Attitude*. One Foot ſtands on the Ocean, the other reſts on the Land. The

Thouſands of Worlds would not be able to procure the Grant.

SHALL I, now, be induſtrious to ſhorten what is no longer than a Span; or to quicken the Pace of what is ever on the Wing? Shall I ſquander away what is *unutterably important*, while it laſts; and, when once departed, is *altogether irrevocable!* O!

wide extended Earth, and the World of Waters, ſerve as Pedeſtals for thoſe mighty Columns.—Conſider the *Action*. His Hand is lifted up to the Height of the Stars. He ſpeaks; and the Regions of the Firmament echo with the mighty Accents, as the midnight Deſart reſounds with the Lion's Roar. The Artillery of the Skies is diſcharged at the Signal; a Peal of ſevenfold Thunders ſpreads the Alarm; and prepares the Univerſe to receive his Orders —To finiſh all; and give the higheſt Grandeur, as well as the utmoſt Solemnity, to the Repreſentation; hear the *Decree* that iſſues from his Mouth. He *ſwears by HIM that liveth for ever and ever*. In whatever Manner, ſo majeſtic a Perſon had expreſſed Himſelf: He could not fail of commanding univerſal Attention. But when he confirms his Speech, by a moſt ſacred and inviolable Oath; we are not only wrapt in ſilent Suſpenſe, but overwhelmed with the profoundeſt Awe. —He ſwears, *That Time ſhall be no longer*. Was ever Voice ſo full of Terror; ſo big with Wonder? It proclaims, not the Fall of Empires, but the final Period of Things. It ſtrikes off the Wheels of Nature; bids Ages and Generations ceaſe to roll; and with one potent Word, conſigns a whole World over to Diſſolution.—This is one among a Multitude of very ſublime and *maſterly Strokes*, to be found in that too much neglected Book—the BIBLE.

O! my Soul, forbear the Folly; forbear the desperate Extravagance. Wilt thou chide as a Loiterer, the Arrow that boundeth from the String; or sweep away Diamonds, as the Refuse of thy House?—Throw Time away! Astonishing, ruinous, irreparable Profuseness! Throw Empires away, and be blameless. But O! be parsimonious of thy Days; husband thy precious Hours. They go connected, indissolubly connected, with Heaven or Hell *. *Improved*, they are a sure Pledge of everlasting Glory; *wasted*, they are a sad Preface to never-ending Confusion and Anguish.

WHAT a *profound Silence* has composed the World! So profound is the Silence, that my very Breath seems a Noise; the Ticking of my Watch is distinctly heard; if I do but stir, it creates a Disturbance —There is, now, none of that confused Din, from the tumultuous City:

* I remember to have seen upon a Sun-dial in a Physician's Garden at *Northampton*, the following *Inscription*; which, I think, is the most *proper Motto* for the Instrument, that measures our Time; and the most *striking Admonition*, that can possibly be presented to every Eye.

AB HOC MOMENTO PENDET ÆTERNITAS.

The weighty Sense of which, I know not how to express in *English*, more happily than in those Words of Dr. *Watts*;

Good God! on what a *slender Thread*
[Or, on what a *Moment* of Time]
Hang everlasting Things!

No Voice of jovial Ruſtics, from the neighbouring Meadow: No chirping Melody from the ſhady Thicket.—Every Lip is ſealed. Not the leaſt Whiſper, invades the Air; nor the leaſt Motion, ruſtles among the Boughs. *Echo* herſelf ſleeps unmoleſted. The expanded Ear, though All Attention, catches no Sound, but the liquid Lapſe of a diſtant murmuring Stream.

All Things are huſh'd, as Nature's Self lay dead.

If, in the midſt of this deep and univerſal Compoſure, Ten Thouſand bellowing Thunders ſhould burſt over my Head; and rend the Skies, with their united Vollies; how ſhould I bear ſo *unexpected a Shock?* It would ſtun my Senſes, and confound my Thoughts. I ſhould ſhudder in every Limb; perhaps, ſink to the Earth with Terror.—Conſider then, O Mortals! conſider the much more *prodigious* and *amazing* Call, which will, ere long, alarm your ſleeping Bones. When the Tenants of the Tomb have ſlumbered, in the moſt undiſturbed Repoſe, for a Multitude of Ages; what an inconceiveable Conſternation muſt the *Shout* of the *Archangel*, and the *Trump* of God, occaſion! Will it not wound the Ear of the Ungodly; and affright, even to Diſtraction, the impenitent Sinner? The ſtupendous Peal will ſound through the Vaſt of Heaven; will ſhake the Foundations of Nature; and pierce even the deepeſt Receſſes of the Grave. And how—

O! how will the Priſoners of Divine Juſtice, be able to endure that tremendous *Summons*, to a far more tremendous Tribunal?—Do Thou, my Soul, liſten to the *ſtill Voice* of the Goſpel. Attend, in this thy Day, to the gracious Invitations of thy Saviour. Then, ſhall that great midnight Cry loſe it's *Horror*, and be *Muſic* in thy Ears. It ſhall be welcome to thy reviving Clay, as the Tidings of Liberty, to the Dungeon Captive; as the Year of Jubilee to the haraſſed Slave. This, this ſhall be it's charming Import; "*Awake, and* "*ſing, ye that dwell in Duſt**."

WHAT a general *Ceſſation* of *Affairs*, has this duſky Hour introduced! A little while ago, all was Hurry, Hurry. Life and Activity exerted themſelves in a thouſand buſy Forms. The City ſwarmed, with paſſing and repaſſing Multitudes. All the Country was Sweat and Duſt. The Air floated in perpetual Agitation, by the flitting Birds, and humming Bees. *Art* ſat prying with her piercing Eyes; while Induſtry plied her reſtleſs Hands.—But ſee; how all this fervent, and impetuous Buſtle, is fled with the ſetting Sun. The Beaſts are ſlunk, to their graſſy Couch; and the winged People are retired, to their downy Neſts. The Hammer has reſigned it's ſounding Taſk, and the File ceaſes to repeat it's flying Touches. Shut is the well-frequented Shop, and it's Threſhold

* Iſa. xxvi. 19.

ſhold no longer worn by the Feet of numerous Cuſtomers. The Village-Swain lies drowned in Slumbers; and even his truſty Dog, who, for a conſiderable Time ſtood Centry at the Door, is extended at his Eaſe, and ſnores with his Maſter.—In every Place *Toil* reclines her Head, and *Application* folds her Arms. All Intereſts ſeem to be forgot; all Purſuits are ſuſpended; all Employment is ſunk away; ſunk away with thoſe fluttering Myriads, which lately ſported in the Sun's departing Rays.—'Tis like the Sabbath of univerſal Nature; or as though the Pulſe of Life ſtood ſtill.

THUS will it be, with our infinitely momentous Concerns; when once *the Shadows of the Evening*, (that long Evening, which follows the Foot-ſteps of Death!) *are ſtretched over Us.* The Dead cannot ſeek unto GOD; the Living, the Living alone, are poſſeſſed of this ineſtimable Opportunity *. "There is no Work or Device, no "Repentance or Amendment, in the Grave †, "whither We are All haſting." When once that *cloſing Scene* is advanced, We ſhall have no other

* *Behold! Now is the accepted Time. Behold! Now is the Day of Salvation.* 2 Cor. vi. 2.

Haſte, haſte, He lies in wait, He's at the Door,
Inſidious Death! Shou'd his ſtrong Hand arreſt,
No Compoſition ſets the Priſ'ner free.

† They who are gone down to the Grave, are repreſented (*Iſa.* xxxviii. 11.) by the Phraſe, ישבי חדל—rendered by *Vitringa*, *Thoſe that inhabit the* Land

other Part to act on this *earthly Theatre*. Then, the Sluggard, who has ſlumbered away Life in a criminal Inactivity, muſt lie down in hopeleſs Diſtreſs, and everlaſting Sorrow. Then, that awful Doom will take place, "He that is *holy*, "let Him be holy ſtill; and he that is *filthy*, let "Him be filthy for ever."

Is it ſo, my Soul? Is this the *only*, *only* Time allotted, for obtaining the great Reward, and making thy Salvation ſure? And art Thou lulled in a *vain Security*; or dreaming in a *ſupine Inadvertency?* Start, O! ſtart from thy Trance. Gird

Land of *Intermiſſion* or *Ceſſation*.—Which prevents all Appearance of *Tautology* in the Sentence; and is, I think, a valuable *Improvement* of the Tranſlation: as it conveys an Idea, not only diſtinct from the preceding, but of a very poetical and very afflicting Nature: ſuch as was perfectly natural for the Royal Singer, and Royal Sufferer to dwell upon, in his deſponding Moments.—Thus interpreted the Senſe will run; "*I ſhall ſee Man no more*; I ſhall be cut "off from the chearful Ways of Men, and all the "Sweets of human Society. And, what is a far-"ther Aggravation of the threatened Stroke, *I ſhall*, "by it's taking place, *be* numbered *with Thoſe, that* "*inherit the Land of Ceſſation* and Inactivity. Where "there will be no more Poſſibility of contributing "to the Happineſs of my Kingdom; no more Op-"portunity of advancing my Creator's Glory; or "of making my own final Salvation ſure."—A Sentiment like *this*, is grand, important, and full of Benevolence; removes all Suſpicion of unbecoming *Puſillanimity*, and does the higheſt *Honour* to the Monarch's Character.

Gird up the Loins of thy Mind, and work while it is Day. Improve the preſent Seed-time, that Eternity may yield a joyful Harveſt.—We eſpecially, who are Watchmen in *Iſrael*, and Miniſters of the glorious Goſpel; may *We* be awakened, by this Conſideration, to all Aſſiduity in our holy Office. Some or other of *our People*, are ever and anon departing into the inviſible State; all *our Friends*, are making inceſſant Approaches to their long Home; and we *ourſelves*, ſhall very ſhortly be tranſmitted to the Confinement of the Tomb. *This* is the favourable Juncture, wherein alone we can contribute to their endleſs Welfare. This is the Criſis, the all-important *Criſis*, of their final Felicity. Inſtantly, therefore, let us pour in our wholſome Inſtructions; inſtantly, let Us ply them with our earneſt Exhortations. A Moment's Delay, may be an irreparable Loſs; may be irretrievable Ruin. While we procraſtinate, a fatal Stroke may intervene; and place *Us*, beyond the Power of adminiſtering; or place *Them*, beyond all Poſſibility of receiving any ſpiritual Good *.

How

* The Caſe, repreſented by the Prophet (1 *Kings* xx. 40.) ſeems perfectly applicable on this Occaſion. *As thy Servant was buſy here and there, He was gone.* So, while we are either *remiſs* in our Function, or laying ourſelves out upon *inferior* Cares, the People of our Charge may be gone:—gone beyond the Influence of our Counſels; beyond the Reach of our Prayers:—gone into the *unchangeable* and eternal State.

How frequently is the Face of Nature *changed!* and, by changing, made more *agreeable!*—The long-continued Glitter of the Day, renders the ſoothing Shades of the Evening doubly welcome. Nor does the Morn ever purple the Eaſt with ſo engaging a Luſtre, as after the Gloom of a dark and diſmal Night.—At preſent, a *Calm* of Tranquillity is ſpread through the Univerſe. The weary Winds have forgot to blow. The gentle Gales have fanned themſelves aſleep. Not ſo much as a ſingle Leaf nods. Even the quivering Aſpin reſts. *And not one Breath curls o'er the Stream.*—Sometimes, on the contrary, the *Tempeſt* ſummons all the Forces of the Air; and pours itſelf, with reſiſtleſs Fury, from the angry North. The whole Atmoſphere is toſſed into tumultuous Confuſion, and the watry World is heaved to the Clouds. The aſtoniſhed Mariner, and his ſtraining Veſſel, now ſcale the rolling Mountain, and hang dreadfully viſible on the broken Surge: now ſhoot, with headlong Impetuoſity, into the yawning Gulf; and neither Hulk, nor Maſt, is ſeen. The Storm ſweeps over the Continent: raves along the City-ſtreets: ſtruggles through the Foreſt-boughs; and terrifies the ſavage Nations with a Howl, more wildly horrid than their own. The knotty Oaks bend before the Blaſt; their iron

iron Trunks groan; and their ſtubborn Limbs are daſhed to the Ground. The lofty Dome rocks; and even the ſolid Tower totters on it's Baſis.

SUCH Variations are kindly contrived, and with an evident Condeſcenſion to the Fickleneſs of our Taſte. Becauſe, a perpetual Repetition of the *ſame* Objects, would create Satiety and *Diſguſt*; therefore, the indulgent Father of our Race has diverſified the univerſal Scene, and bid every Appearance bring with it the Charm of Novelty.—This Circumſtance is *beneficial*, as well as *entertaining*. Providence, ever gracious to Mortals; ever intent upon promoting our Felicity; has taken care to mingle, in the Conſtitution of Things, what is pleaſing to our Imagination, with what is ſerviceable to our Intereſts. The piercing Winds, and rugged Aſpect of Winter, render the balmy Gales, and flowery Scenes of Spring, peculiarly delightful. At the ſame Time, the keen Froſts mellow the Soil, and prepare it for the Hand of Induſtry. The ruſhing Rains impregnate the Glebe, and fit it to become a Magazine of Plenty. The Earth is a great *Laboratory*; and *December*'s Cold collects the groſs Materials, which are *ſublimated* by the refining Warmth of *May*. The Air is a pure elaſtic Fluid; and were it always to remain in *this* motionleſs Serenity, it would loſe much of it's active Spring; was it never

agitated by *those* wholesome Concussions, it would contract a noisome, perhaps, a pestilential Taint. In which Cases, our Respiration, instead of purifying, would corrupt the vital Juices; instead of supplying Us with Refreshment, would be a Source of Diseases; or every Gasp We draw, might be unavoidable Death *.—How then should we admire, how should we adore, that happy Union of Benignity and Wisdom; which, from a *Variety* of Dispensations, produces an *Uniformity* of Good! Produces a perpetual Succession of Delights, and an uninterrupted Series of Advantages!

THE

* Considering the immense Quantity of Coals, and other combustible Materials, which are daily consumed, and evaporate into the Air. Considering the numberless Steams, and Clouds of Smoke, which almost continually overwhelm populous Cities;—the noisome Exhalations, which arise from thronged Infirmaries, and loathsome Jayls; from stagnating Lakes, and putrid Fens;—the Variety of offensive and unwholsome Effluvia, which proceed from other Causes;—it is a very remarkable Instance of a Providence, at once tenderly kind, and infinitely powerful, that Mankind is not *suffocated* with Stench; that the Air is not *choaked* with Filth.—The Air is the *common Sewer*, into which ten thousand times ten thousand Nuisances are incessantly discharged; yet it is preserved so *thoroughly clear*, as to afford the most transparent Medium for Vision; so *delicately undulatory*, as to transmit, with all imaginable Distinctness, every Diversity of Sound; so *perfectly pure*, as to be the constant Refiner of the Fluids, in every Animal that breathes.

THE *Darkneſs* is now at it's Height; and I cannot but admire the obliging Manner of it's taking place. It comes not with a blunt and abrupt Incivility, but makes gentle and reſpectful Advances. A *precipitate* Tranſition, from the Splendors of Day, to all the Horrors of Midnight, would be inconvenient and frightful. It would bewilder the Traveller in his Journey; it would ſtrike the Creation with Amazement; and, perhaps, be pernicious to the Organs of Sight. Therefore the Gloom ruſhes not upon us inſtantaneouſly, but increaſes by ſlow Degrees; and, ſending *Twilight* before as it's *Harbinger*, decently adverti ſes us of it's Approach. By this means, we are neither alarmed, nor incommoded, by the Change; but are able to take all ſuitable and timely Meaſures, for it's Reception.—Thus graciouſly has Providence regulated, not only the *grand Viciſſitudes* of the Seaſons, but alſo the *common Interchanges* of Light and Darkneſs, with an apparent Reference to our Comfort.

NOW, the fierce *Inhabitants* of the *Foreſt* forſake their Dens. A thouſand grim Forms, a thouſand growling Monſters, pace the Deſart. Death is in their Jaws, while ſtung with Hunger, and athirſt for Blood, they roam their nightly Rounds.—Unfortunate the *Traveller*, who is overtaken by the Night, in thoſe diſmal Wilds! How muſt he ſtand aghaſt, at the mingled Yell of ravenous Throats, and Lions roaring after their Prey! Defend Him, propitious Heaven!

or

or elſe He muſt ſee his endearing Spouſe, and hail his native Home, no more!—Now, the prowling Wolf, like a murderous Ruffian, dogs the Shepherd's Footſteps, and beſets his bleating Charge. The Fox, like a crafty Felon, ſteals to the thatched Cottage, and carries off the feathered Booty.

HAPPY for the World, were theſe the only Deſtroyers that walk in Darkneſs. But, alas! there are Savages in human Shape; who, muffled in Shades, infeſt the Abodes of civilized Life. The Sons of *Violence* make Choice of this Seaſon *, to perpetrate the moſt outrageous Acts of Wrong and Robbery. The *Adulterer* waiteth for the Twilight; and, baſer than the Villain on the Highway, betrays the Honour of his Boſom-friend. Now, *Faction* forms her cloſe Cabals, and whiſpers her traiterous Inſinuations. Now, *Rebellion* plans her accurſed Plots, and prepares the Train to blow a Nation into Ruin. Now Crimes, which hide their odious Heads in the Day, haunt the Seats of Society, and ſtalk through the Gloom with audacious Front. Now, the *Vermin* of the *Stews* crawl from their lurking Holes, to wallow in Sin, and ſpread Contagion

* — — — When Night
Darkens the Streets, then wander forth the Sons
Of *Belial*, flown with Inſolence and Wine.
MILT.

through the Night. Each ſoothing himſelf with the fond Notion, That all is ſafe; That no Eye ſees.

ARE They then concealed? Prepoſterous Madmen! To draw the Curtain between their infamous Practices, and a little Set of Mortals; but lay them open, to all theſe chaſte and *wakeful Eyes* of Heaven *! As though the Moon and Stars were made, to light Men to their Revels, and not to GOD.—Are they then concealed? No, truly. Was every one of theſe vigilant Luminaries cloſed; an Eye *keener* than the Lightning's Flaſh, an Eye *brighter* than Ten thouſand Suns, beholds their every Motion. Their thickeſt Shades are beaming Day †, to the jealous Inſpector, and ſupreme Judge of human Actions.—Deluded Creatures! have ye not heard, have ye not read, "That "Clouds and Darkneſs are HIS majeſtic Reſi-"dence ‡?" In that very Gloom, to which you fly for Covert, he erects his Throne. What you reckon your *Screen*, is the Bar of his Tribunal. O! remember this! Stand in Awe, and ſin not. Remember,

* — — *Sed Luna videt, ſed Sidera Teſtes*
Intendunt Oculos.

† This is finely, and very forcibly expreſſed by the Pſalmiſt: *If I ſay, Peradventure the Darkneſs ſhall cover me; then ſhall my Night be turned to Day.* Or, as it may be rendered ſomewhat more emphatically, *Even the Night ſhall be broad Daylight all around me.* Pſal. cxxxix. 10.

‡ Pſal. xcvii. 2.

Remember, that the great and terrible GOD *is about your Path**, when you take your midnight Range; is *about your Bed*, when you indulge the looſe Deſire; *and ſpies out all your Ways*, be they ever ſo ſecretly conducted, or artfully diſguiſed.

SOME Minutes ago, a Paſſenger croſſed along the Road. His Horſe's Foot ſtruck the Ground, and fetched Fire from a Flint. My Eye, tho' at a Diſtance, catched the View; and ſaw, with *great Clearneſs*, the tranſient Sparkles: Of which, had I been ever ſo near, I ſhould not have diſcerned the *leaſt Glimpſe*, under the Blaze of Day.—So †, when Sickneſs has drawn a *Veil* over

* The original Words are much ſtronger than the Tranſlation. זרית and חסכנתה ſignify, Thou *ſifteſt* my Path, and art *intimately acquainted with* all my Ways. The former, I apprehend, denoting the *exact* Cognizance, which the Almighty taketh; the latter implying the *conſtant* Inſpection, which he exerciſeth; over all the Circumſtances of our Conduct. *Pſal.* cxxxix. 2.

† I beg Leave to inform the *young Gentleman*, whoſe Name dignifies my Dedication; That *this* was a Remark of his honoured *Father*, when we rode together, and converſed in a duſky Evening. I mention this Circumſtance, partly, to ſecure the Paragraph from Contempt; partly, to give Him, and the World, an Idea of that eminently ſerious Taſte, which diſtinguiſhed my deceaſed Friend.—The *leſs obvious* the Reflection, the more clearly it diſcovers a

over the Gaiety of our Hearts; when Misfortunes have eclipſed the Splendor of our outward Circumſtances; how many *important Convictions* preſent themſelves with the brighteſt Evidence! Under the Sunſhine of Proſperity, they lay undiſcovered; but, when ſome intervening Cloud has darkened the Scene, they emerge from their Obſcurity, and even glitter upon our Minds. Then the *World*, that deluſive Cheat, confeſſes her Emptineſs: but JESUS, the bright and Morning-Star, beams forth with inimitable Luſtre. Then, *Vice* loſes all her fallacious Allurements; that painted Strumpet is horrible, as the Hags of Hell: but *Virtue*, deſpiſed Virtue, gains Lovelineſs from a louring Providence, and treads the Shades with more than mortal Charms.—May this reconcile me, and all the *Sons* of *Sorrow*, to our appointed Share of Suffering! If Tribulation tend to diſſipate the inward Darkneſs, and pour heavenly Day upon our Minds; welcome Diſtreſs; welcome Diſappoinment; welcome whatever our froward Fleſh, or peeviſh Paſſions, would *miſcall* Calamities. *Theſe light Afflictions, which are but for a Moment*, ſhall ſit

Turn of Mind, remarkably ſpiritual; which would ſuffer nothing to eſcape, without yielding ſome religious Improvement. The *meaner* the Incident, the more admirable was that Fertility of Imagination; which could deduce the ſublimeſt Truths, from the moſt trivial Occurrences.

ſit eaſy upon our Spirits; ſince they befriend our Knowledge; promote our Faith; and ſo, "*work* "*out for us, a far-more exceeding and eternal* "*Weight of Glory* *."

How has this Darkneſs ſnatched every ſplendid and graceful Object from my Sight! It has daſhed the Sponge over the Pictures of Spring, and deſtroyed all the *delicate Diſtinctions* of Things. Where are now the fine Tinges, which ſo lately charmed me from the glowing Parterre? The Bluſh is ſtruck out, from the Cheeks of the Roſe; and the ſnowy Hue, is dropt from the Lily. I caſt my Eyes toward a magnificent

* 2 *Cor.* iv. 17. The great *Stephens*, that Oracle of *Grecian* Learning, tranſlates καθ' υπερβολην, *Quo nihil majus dici aut fingi poteſt.* But how does the Senſe riſe! How is the Idea inlarged, under *Two* ſuch forcible Expreſſions! καθ' υπερβολην εις υπερβολην.—The whole Verſe is a Maſter-piece of the beautful *Antitheſis*, the lively *Deſcription*, and the nervous *Diction*. It is one of thoſe exquiſite Paſſages in the inſpired Writings, which, like ſome rich *aromatic Plants*, cannot be transferred from their own generous and native Soil, without being impaired in their Vivacity, and loſing much of their Delicacy. Perhaps, the following Verſion may be ſomewhat leſs injurious to the ſacred Original, than the common Tranſlation;—*Our very light Affliction, which is but juſt for the preſent Moment, worketh out a far more exceeding, and incomparably great, and eternal Weight of Glory.*

Seat; but the aſpiring Columns, and fair-expanding Front, are mingled in rude Confuſion. Without the Sun, all the Elegance of the blooming World, is a *mere Blank*; all the Symmetry of Architecture, is a *ſhapeleſs Heap*.

Is not this an expreſſive Emblem of the Lovelineſs, which the *Sun* of *Righteouſneſs* transfuſes into all that is amiable? Was it not for JESUS, and his Merits, I ſhould ſigh with Anguiſh of Spirit; even while I rove through Ranks of the moſt beautiful Flowers, or breathe amidſt a Wilderneſs of Sweets. Was it not for JESUS, and his Merits; I ſhould roam like ſome *diſconſolate Spectre*, even through the Smiles of Creation, and the Careſſes of Fortune. My Converſation in this World, though dreſſed in the moſt engaging Forms of external Pleaſure, would be like the Paſſage of a *condemned Malefactor*, through enamelled Meadows, and Bowers of Bliſs, to be broke upon the Wheel, or to expire on the Rack. But a daily Reflection on the LAMB's atoning Blood; a comfortable Truſt, that my Soul is reconciled through this divine Expiation; this is the Ray, the golden Ray, which irradiates the Face of the Univerſe. This is the *Oil* of *Beauty*, which makes all Things wear a chearful Aſpect; and the *Oil* of *Gladneſs*, which diſpoſes the Spectator to behold them with Delight.

Delight *. This, this is the ſecret Charm, which teaches Nature, in all her Proſpects and all her Productions, ſo exquiſitely to pleaſe.

" MAN goeth forth to his Work, and to his " Labour, till the Evening." But then his Strength fails; his Spirits flag; and he ſtands in need, not only of ſome Reſpite from Toil, but of ſome kindly and ſovereign Refreſhments.— What an admirable Proviſion for this Purpoſe, is *Sleep!* Sleep introduces a moſt welcome Vacation, both for the Soul and Body. The Exerciſes of the Brain, and the Labours of the Hand, are at once diſcontinued. So that the *weary* Limbs repair their exhauſted Vigour; while the

* Thus applied, that fine Piece of *Flattery*, addreſſed to the *Heathen* Emperor, is ſtrictly and literally *true*.

——— *Vultus ubi tuus*
Affulſit populo, gratior it dies,
Et ſoles melius nitent. HORAT.

Which I would caſt in a *Chriſtian* Mould, and thus tranſlate:

When Faith preſents the Saviour's Death,
And whiſpers, " This is thine;"
Sweetly my riſing Hours advance,
And peacefully decline.

While ſuch my Views, the radiant Sun
Sheds a more ſprightly Ray;
Each Object ſmiles; all Nature charms:
I ſing my Cares away.

penſive Thoughts drop their Load of Sorrows, and the *buſy* ones reſt from the Fatigue of Application.—Moſt reviving Cordial! Equally beneficial to our animal and intellectual Powers. It ſupples the fleſhly Machine, and keeps all it's nice Movements in a proper Poſture for eaſy Play. It animates the thinking Faculties with freſh Alacrity, and rekindles their Ardor for the Studies of the Dawn. Without theſe enlivening Recruits, how ſoon would the moſt robuſt Conſtitution, be waſted into a *walking Skeleton*; and the moſt learned Sage, degenerate into a *hoary Idiot!*—Some Time ago, I beheld, with Surprize, poor *Florio*. His Air was wild; his Countenance meagre; his Thoughts roving, and Speech diſconcerted. Inquiring the Cauſe of this ſtrange Alteration, I was informed, That, for ſeveral Nights, he had not cloſed his Eyes in Sleep. For want of which *noble Reſtorative*, that ſprightly Youth, (who was once the Life of the Diſcourſe, and the Darling of the Company) is become a Spectacle of Miſery and Horror.

How many of my Fellow-creatures are, at this very Inſtant, confined to the Bed of Languiſhing; and complaining, with that illuſtrious Sufferer of old, *Wearisome Nights are appointed to me*!* Inſtead of indulging ſoft Repoſe, they are counting the tedious Hours; telling every ſtriking Clock; or meaſuring the very Moments, by

3 * Job vii. 3.

by their throbbing Pulſe. How many, haraſſed with *Pain*, moſt paſſionately long to make ſome little Truce with their Agonies, in peaceful Slumbers! How many, ſick with *Diſquietude*, and reſtleſs even on their downy Pillows, would purchaſe this tranſient Oblivion of their Woes, almoſt at any Rate!—That, which Wealth cannot procure; which Multitudes ſigh for in vain; thy GOD has beſtowed on Thee, Times out of Number. The *welcome Viſitant*, punctual at the needed Hour, has entered thy Chamber, and poured his Poppies round thy Couch. Has gently cloſed thy Eye-lids, and ſhed his ſlumberous Dews over all thy Senſes.

SINCE Sleep is ſo abſolutely neceſſary; ſo ineſtimably valuable; obſerve, what a *fine Apparatus* Almighty Goodneſs has made, to accommodate us with the balmy Bleſſing. With how kind a Precaution, He removes whatever might obſtruct it's Acceſs, or impede it's Influence! He draws around us the *Curtain* of *Darkneſs*; which inclines us to a drowſy Indolence, and conceals every Object, that might too ſtrongly agitate the Senſe. He conveys *Peace* into our *Apartments*; and impoſes Silence, on the whole Creation. Every Animal is bidden to tread ſoftly, or rather to ceaſe from it's Motion, when Man is retiring to his Repoſe.—May we not diſcern, in this gracious Diſpoſition of Things, the tender Cares

of

of a *Nurſing-Mother*; who huſhes every Noiſe, and ſecludes every Diſturbance, when She has laid the Child of her Love to Reſt? *So*, by ſuch ſoothing Circumſtances, and gently-working Opiates, *HE giveth, to his Beloved, Sleep* *.

ANOTHER ſignal Inſtance of a Providence intent upon our Welfare, is, that we are preſerved *ſafe* in the Hours of *Slumber*. How are we then loſt to all Apprehenſion of Danger; even though the Murderer be at our Bed-ſide, or his naked Sword at our Breaſt! Deſtitute of all Concern for ourſelves, we are unable to *think of*, much more to *provide for*, our own Security. At theſe Moments, therefore, we lie open to innumerable Perils: Perils, from the reſiſtleſs Rage of Flames: Perils, from the inſidious Artifices of Thieves, or the outrageous Violence of Robbers: Perils, from the *irregular Workings* † of our own Thoughts, and eſpecially from the Incurſions of our ſpiritual Enemy.

WHAT

* Pſal cxxvii. 2.

† I think, it is referable only to a ſuperintending, and watchful *Providence*, that We are not hurried into the moſt *pernicious* Actions, when our Imagination is heated, and our Reaſon ſtupefied by Dreams. —We have ſometimes heard of unfortunate Perſons, who, walking in their Sleep, have thrown themſelves headlong from a Window, and been daſhed to Death on the Pebbles. And whence is it, that ſuch diſaſtrous Accidents are only *related* as Pieces of News, not experienced by Ourſelves, or our Families?

WHAT dreadful Mischief might that restless, that implacable *Adversary* of *Mankind* work, was there not an invisible Hand to controul his Rage, and protect poor Mortals! What

lies? Were *our* Minds more sober in their Operations, or more circumspect in their Regards? No, verily: Nothing could be more wild, than their Excursions; and None could be more inattentive to their own Welfare. Therefore, if *We have laid Us down, and slept* in Peace; it was, because the LORD vouchsafed Us the sweet Refreshment: if *We rose again* in Safety; it was, *because the LORD sustained Us* with his unremitted Protection.

Will the candid Reader excuse me, if I add a short Story; or rather a *Matter* of *Fact*, suitable to the preceding Remark?—Two Persons, who had been hunting together in the Day, slept together the following Night. One of them was renewing the Pursuit in his Dream; and, having run the whole Circle of the Chace, came, at last, to the Fall of the Stag. Upon this, He cries out with a determined Ardor; *I'll kill him: I'll kill him:* and immediately feels for the Knife, which he carried in his Pocket. His Companion happening to be awake, and observing what passed, leaped from the Bed. Being secure from Danger, and the Moon shining into the Room, He stood to view the Event. When, to his inexpressible Surprize, the infatuated Sportsman gave several deadly Stabs, in the very Place, where, a Moment before, the Throat and the Life of his Friend lay.—This I mention, as a Proof, that nothing hinders Us, even from being Assassins of *Others*, or Murderers of *Ourselves*, amidst the mad Sallies of Sleep; only the *preventing Care* of our Heavenly Father.

What Scenes of Horror might he repreſent to our Imaginations, and "ſcare us with Dreams, "or terrify us with Viſions*!" But the *Keeper* of *Iſrael*, who never ſlumbers nor ſleeps, interpoſes in our Behalf; at once to *cheriſh* us under his Wings, and to *defend* us as with a Shield.—It is ſaid of *Solomon*; "That Three-"ſcore valiant Men were about his Bed; all ex-"pert in War; every one with his Sword upon "his Thigh, becauſe of Fear in the Night †." But One greater than *Solomon*; One mightier than Myriads of armed Hoſts; even the great JEHOVAH, in whom is everlaſting Strength; He vouchſafes to *encamp about our Houſes*; to watch over our ſleeping Minutes, and to ſtop all the Avenues of Ill.—O! the unwearied and condeſcending Goodneſs of our Creator! Who *lulls* us to our *Reſt*, by bringing on the ſilent Shades; and *plants* his own ever-watchful Eye as our *Centinel*, while we enjoy the needful Repoſe.

REASON, now, reſigns her ſedate Office; and *Fancy*, extravagant Fancy, leads the Mind through

* What a complete Maſter that malignant Spirit is, in exhibiting *viſionary Repreſentations*, appears from his Conduct towards CHRIST, on the high Mountain: and that he is too ready, if not reſtrained by an over-ruling Power, to employ his Dexterity in *afflicting Mankind*, is evident from his Treatment of *Job*. See *Luke* iv. 5. *Job* vii. 14.

† Cant. iii. 7, 8.

through a Maze of Vanity. The Head is crouded with falſe Images, and tantalized with the moſt ridiculous Miſapprehenſions of Things. Some, are expatiating amidſt *Fairy Fields*, and gathering Garlands of viſionary Bliſs; while their Bodies are ſtretched on a Wiſp of Straw, and ſheltered by the Cobwebs of a Barn. Others, quite inſenſible of their Room of State, are mourning in a doleful *Dungeon*, or ſtruggling with the raging Billows. Perhaps, with haſty Steps, they climb the craggy Cliff; and, with real Anxiety, fly from the imaginary Danger. Or elſe, benumbed with ſudden Fear, and finding themſelves unable to eſcape, they give up at once their Hopes and their Efforts; and, though reclined on a Couch of Ivory, and ſinking, all helpleſs and diſtreſſed, in the furious Whirlpool. So unaccountable are the *Vagaries* of the *Brain*, while Sleep maintains it's Dominion over the Limbs!

But is This the only Seaſon, when abſurd incoherent Irregularities play their Magic on our Minds? Are there not thoſe who *dream*, even in their *waking* Moments!—Some pride Themſelves in a Notion of ſuperior Excellency, becauſe the Royal Favour has annexed a few ſplendid Titles to their Names; or becauſe the dying Silkworm has bequeathed her fineſt Threads, to cover their Nakedneſs.—Others congratulate their

their own ſignal Happineſs, becauſe Loads of golden Lumber are amaſſed together in their Coffers; or promiſe themſelves a moſt ſuperlative Felicity indeed, when ſome Thouſands more are added to the uſeleſs Heap.—Nor are there wanting Others, who gape after *ſubſtantial* Satisfaction from *airy* Applauſe; and flatter themſelves with, I know not what, Immortality in the momentary Buz of Renown.—Are any of Theſe a whit more reaſonable in their Opinions, than the poor ragged Wretch in his Reveries; who, while ſnoring under a Hedge, exults in the Poſſeſſion of his ſtately Palace, and ſumptuous Furniture?—If Perſons, who are *very Vaſſals* to their own *domineering* Paſſions, and led captive by numberleſs Temptations: if theſe Perſons pique themſelves with a Conceit of their Liberty, and fancy themſelves the *generous* and *gallant* Spirits of the Age: where is the Difference between Theirs, and the Madman's Frenzy; who, though chained to the Floor, is throned in Thought, and wielding an imaginary Sceptre?—In a Word; as many as borrow their Dignity from a Plume of Feathers, or the gaudy Trappings of Fortune; as many as ſend their Souls to ſeek for Bliſs in the Blandiſhments of Senſe, or in any Thing ſhort of the divine Favour, and a well-grounded Hope of

6 the

the incorruptible Inheritance *; what are they but Dreamers with their Eyes open; *delirious*, though in *Health?*

WOULD you see their Picture, drawn to the very Life; and the Success of their Schemes, calculated with the utmost Exactness; cast your Eye upon that fine Representation, exhibited by the Prophet: *It shall be even as when a hungry Man dreameth, and behold, he eateth; but he awaketh, and his Soul is empty: Or as when a thirsty Man dreameth, and behold, he drinketh; but he awaketh, and behold, he is faint, and his Soul hath Appetite* †. Such is the Race, and such the Prize, of all those Candidates for Honour and Joy; who run wide from the Mark of the high Calling of GOD, in CHRIST JESUS. They live in Vanity, and die in Woe.—Awaken us, merciful LORD, from these *noon-tide Trances!* Awaken us, while Conviction may turn to our Advantage, and not serve only to increase our Torment. O! let our "Eyes be enlightened, "to discern the Things that are excellent;" and no longer be imposed upon by fantastic Appearances, which, however *pompous* they may seem, will prove more *empty* than the Visions of the

* These give a sacred, and home-felt Delight,
A *sober Certainty* of *waking* Bliss.
MILT. *Comus.*

† Isa. xxix. 8.

the Night, more *tranſient* than the Dream that is forgotten.

HAVING mentioned Sleep and Dreams, let me once again conſider thoſe remarkable Incidents of our Frame: ſo very remarkable, that I may venture to call them, a kind of experimental *Myſtery*, and little leſs than a ſtanding *Miracle*. —Behold the moſt *vigorous Conſtitution*, when ſtretched on the Bed of Eaſe, and totally reſigned to the Slumbers of the Night. It's Activity is oppreſſed with Fetters of Indolence; it's Strength is conſigned over to a temporary Annihilation; the Nerves are like a Bow unſtrung, and the whole animal Syſtem is like a motionleſs Log.—Behold a Perſon of the moſt *delicate Senſations*, and *amiable Diſpoſitions*. His Eyes, though thrown wide open, admit not the viſual Ray; at leaſt, diſtinguiſh not Objects. His Ears, with the Organs unimpaired, and articulate Accents beating upon the Drum, perceive not the Sound; at leaſt, apprehend not the Meaning. The Senſes, and their exquiſitely fine Feelings, are overwhelmed with an unaccountable Stupefaction. You call him a *ſocial* Creature; but where are his ſocial Affections? He knows not the Father, that begat him; and takes no Notice of the Friend, that is as his own Soul. The Wife of his Boſom may expire by his Side, and He lie more unconcerned

concerned than a Barbarian. The Children of his Body, may be tortured with the ſevereſt Pangs; and He, even in the ſame Chamber, remain untouched with the leaſt Commiſeration. —Behold the moſt *ingenious Scholar:* whoſe Judgment is piercing, and able to trace the moſt intricate Difficulties of Science; his Taſte refined, and quick to reliſh all the Beauties of Sentiment and Compoſition. Yet, at this Juncture, the thinking Faculties are unhinged, and the intellectual Oeconomy quite diſconcerted. Inſtead of cloſe connected Reaſonings, nothing but a diſjointed Huddle of abſurd Ideas: inſtead of well-digeſted Principles, nothing but a diſorderly Jumble of crude Conceptions. The moſt palpable Deluſions, impoſe upon his Imagination. The whole Night paſſes, and he frequently miſtakes it for a ſingle Minute: is not ſenſible of the Tranſition, hardly ſenſible of any Duration.

YET, no ſooner does the Morning dawn, and Day-light enter the Room; but this ſtrange Inchantment vaniſhes. The Man awakes, and finds himſelf poſſeſſed of all the valuable Endowments; which, for ſeveral Hours, were ſuſpended, or loſt. His Sinews are braced, and fit for Action. His Senſes are alert and keen. The romantic Viſionary brightens into the Maſter of Reaſon. The frozen or benumbed Affections, melt with Tenderneſs, and glow with Benevolence. And, what is beyond meaſure ſurpriſing, the intoxicated Mind works itſelf ſober,

not by *ſlow Degrees*; but, in the *Twinkling* of an Eye, recovers from it's Perturbation.—Why does not the Stupor, which deadens all the nice Operations of the animal Powers, hold faſt it's Poſſeſſion? When the Thoughts are once diſadjuſted, why are they not always in Confuſion? How is it, that they are rallied in a Moment; and, from the wildeſt Irregularity, reduced to the moſt orderly Array?—From an Inactivity, reſembling Death; how is the Body ſo *ſuddenly* reſtored, to Vigour and Agility? From Extravagancies, bordering upon Madneſs; how is the Underſtanding *inſtantaneouſly* re-eſtabliſhed, in Sedateneſs and Harmony?—Surely, "this is the "LORD's Doing, and it ſhould be marvellous "in our Eyes:" ſhould awaken our Gratitude, and inſpirit our Praiſe.

THIS is the Time, in which *Ghoſts* are ſuppoſed to make their Appearance. Now, the *timorous Imagination* teems with Phantoms, and creates numberleſs Terrors to itſelf. Now dreary Forms in ſullen State, ſtalk along the Gloom; or, ſwifter than Lightning, glide acroſs the Shades. Now, Voices more than mortal * are heard

* *Vox quoque per lucos vulgo exaudita ſilentes*
Ingens, & ſimulacra modis pallentia miris
Viſa ſub obſcurum noctis.— VIRG.

heard from the echoing Vaults, and Groans iſſue from the hollow Tombs. Now, melancholy Spectres viſit the Ruins of antient Monaſteries, and frequent the ſolitary Dwellings of the Dead. They paſs and repaſs, in unſubſtantial Images, along the forſaken Galleries; or take their determined Stand, over ſome lamented Grave.—How often has the School-boy fetched a long Circuit, and trudged many a needleſs Step, in order to avoid the haunted Church-yard? Or, if Neceſſity, ſad Neceſſity, has obliged him to croſs the Spot; where *human Skulls* are lodged below, and the *baleful Yews* ſhed ſupernumerary Horrors above; a Thouſand hideous Stories ruſh into his Memory. Fear adds Wings to his Feet; he ſcarce touches the Ground; dares not once look behind him; and bleſſes his good Fortune, if no frightful Sound purred at his Heels, if no ghaſtly Shape bolted upon his Sight.

'Tis ſtrange, to obſerve the exceſſive Timidity, which poſſeſſes many Peoples Minds, on this *fanciful Occaſion*; while they are void of all Concern, on others of the moſt *tremendous Import*. Thoſe, who are ſtartled, in any dark and lonely Walk, at the *very Apprehenſion* of a ſingle Spectre; are nevertheleſs unimpreſſed at the *ſure Proſpect*, of entering into a whole World of diſembodied Beings. Nay, are without any Emotions of Awe, though they know themſelves to

be haſtening into the Preſence of the Great, Infinite, and Eternal Spirit.—Should ſome pale Meſſenger from the Regions of the Dead, draw back our Curtains at the Hour of Midnight; and appointing ſome particular Place, ſay, as the horrid Apparition to *Brutus*, *I'll meet thee there* *: I believe, the boldeſt Heart would feel ſomething like a Panic; would ſeriouſly think upon the Adventure, and be in Pain for the Event. But, when a Voice from Heaven cries, in the awakening Language of the Prophet, *Prepare to meet thy GOD, O* Iſrael †; how little is the Warning regarded! How ſoon is it forgot! Prepoſterous Stupidity! To be *utterly unconcerned*, where it is the trueſt Wiſdom to take the Alarm; and to be *all Trepidation*, where there is nothing really terrible!—Do Thou, my Soul, remember thy Saviour's Admonition; "*I will* "*forewarn you, whom you ſhall fear.* Fear "not theſe imaginary Horrors of the Night. "But fear that awful Being; whoſe Revelation "of Himſelf, though with Expreſſions of pecu-

"liar

* The Story of *Brutus*, and his *evil Genius*, is well known. Nor muſt it be denied, that the preciſe Words of the Spectre to the Hero were, *I'll meet thee at* Philippi. But, as this would not anſwer my Purpoſe, I was obliged to make an Alteration, in the Circumſtance of *Place*.

† Amos iv. 12.

" liar Mercy, made *Moſes*, his favourite Servant, " tremble exceedingly. Whoſe Manifeſtation, " when He appears with Purpoſes of inexorable " Vengeance, will make *mighty Conquerors*; who " were familiar with Dangers, and eſtranged to " Diſmay; call upon the Mountains to fall on " them, and the Rocks to cover them. The " Menace of whoſe majeſtic Eye, when He " comes attended with thouſand Thouſands of " his immortal Hoſts, will make the very Hea- " vens cleave aſunder, and the Earth flee away.— " O! dread HIS Diſpleaſure; ſecure HIS Fa- " vour; and then Thou may'ſt commit all thy " other Anxieties to the Wind. Thou may'ſt " laugh at every other Fear."

THIS brings to my Mind a memorable and amazing Occurrence, recorded in the Book of *Job* *. Which is, I think, no inconſiderable Proof of the *real Exiſtence* of Apparitions †, on ſome

* Job iv. 12, 14, &c.

† *Is a Proof of the real Exiſtence of Apparitions.*—If the Senſe, in which I have always underſtood this Paſſage, be true—*Eliphaz*, I apprehend, was neither in a Trance, nor in a Dream, but perfectly awake. Though He ſpeaks of Sleep; He ſpeaks of it, as fallen not upon *himſelf*, but upon *other* Men. He does not mention *Dreams*, though חלומות *Somnia*, would have ſuited the Verſe (if the Book be in Metre) altogether as well as חזיונות *Viſiones*.—It could not, ſurely

ſome *very extraordinary* Emergencies; while it diſcountenances thoſe Legions of idle Tales, which Superſtition has raiſed, and Credulity received. Since it teaches us, that if, at any Time, thoſe Viſitants from the unknown World, render themſelves perceivable by Mortals, it is not upon any Errand of frivolous Conſequence; but, to *convey Intelligences* of the utmoſt Moment, or to *work Impreſſions* of the higheſt Advantage.

'TWAS in the *Dead of Night*. All Nature lay ſhrouded in Darkneſs. Every Creature was buried in Sleep. The moſt profound Silence reigned

ſurely be a *Wind*, as ſome tranſlate the Word רוח. Becauſe, the Circumſtance of *ſtanding ſtill*, is not ſo compatible with the Nature of a Wind; and a Wind would have paſſed *above* Him, all *around* Him, as well as *before* Him. Not to add, how low a Remark it is, and how unworthy of a Place in ſo auguſt a Deſcription, that He *could not diſcern the Form* of a Wind.—It ſeems, therefore, to have been a real Spirit; either *Angelical* as were thoſe, which preſented themſelves to *Abraham* reſting at the Door of his Tent, and to *Lot* ſitting in the Gate of *Sodom*; or elſe, the Spirit of ſome *departed Saint*, as in the Caſe of *Samuel*'s Apparition, or the famous Appearance of *Moſes* and *Elijah* on the Mount of Tranſfiguration.—A Spirit, aſſuming ſome *Vehicle*, in order to become viſible to the human Eye. Which, accordingly, *Eliphaz* ſaw, exhibiting itſelf as an Object of Sight. But ſaw ſo obſcurely and indiſtinctly, that He was not able, either to deſcribe it's *Aſpect*, or to diſcern *whom* it reſembled.

reigned through the Universe. In these solemn Moments, *Eliphaz* alone, all wakeful and solitary, was musing upon sublime and heavenly Subjects.—When, lo! an awful Being, from the invisible Realms, burst into his Apartment *. *A Spirit passed before his Face.* Astonishment seized the Beholder. His Bones shivered within Him; his Flesh trembled all over Him; and the Hair of his Head stood erect with Horror.—Sudden and unexpected, was the Appearance of the Phantom; not such it's Departure. *It stood still*, to present itself more fully to his View. It made a solemn Pause, to prepare his Mind for some momentous Message.—After which, a Voice was heard. A Voice, for the Importance

* I have given this solemn Picture a *modern* Dress, rather for the Sake of Variety and Illustration, than from any Apprehension of improving the admirable Original. Such an Attempt, I am sensible, would be more absurdly vain, than to lacquer Gold, or paint the Diamond. The Description, in *Eliphaz*'s own Language, is awful and affecting to the last Degree. A *Night-Piece*, dressed in all the Circumstances of the deepest Horror. I question, whether *Shakespeare* himself, though so peculiarly happy for his great Command of terrifying Images, has any Thing superior or comparable to this. The Judges of fine Composition *see* the masterly Strokes; and, I believe, the most ordinary Reader *feels* them, chilling his Blood, and awakening Emotions of Dread in his Mind.

of it's Meaning, worthy to be had in everlasting Remembrance; for the Solemnity of it's Delivery, enough to alarm a Heart of Stone. It spoke; and this was the Purport of it's Words;—"*Shall* "Man, *frail Man*, *be just before the mighty* "*GOD? Shall* even *the most accomplished of* "*Mortals be pure in the Sight of his Maker* *? "*Behold*, and consider it attentively. *He put* "*no* such *Trust in his* most exalted *Servants*, as "should bespeak them incapable of Defect. "*And his* very *Angels He charged with Folly*; "as sinking, even in the highest Perfection of "their Holiness, infinitely beneath his transcend- "ent Glories; as falling, even in all the "Fidelity of their Obedience, inexpressibly "short of the Homage due to his adorable "Majesty.

* There seems to be a significant and beautiful *Gradation* in the *Hebrew* Words אנוש and גבר, which I have endeavoured to preserve, by a Sort of *Paraphrastic Version*.—The Reader will observe a *new* Turn given to the Sentiment; preferable, I think, to that which our *English* Translation exhibits. Not, *shall Man be more just than GOD?* But, *shall Man be just before*, or *in the Sight of GOD?* The Passage, thus rendered, speaks a Truth incomparably more weighty, and needful to be inculcated. A Truth, exactly parallel to that humbling Confession of the Prophet, *We are all as an unclean Thing*; and to that solemn Declaration of the Psalmist, *In thy Sight shall no Man living be justified*.

" Majesty. If angelic Natures must not pre-
" sume to justify, either Themselves, or their
" Services, before uncreated Purity; *how much*
" *more* absurd is such a Notion, how much more
" impious such an Attempt, in *Them that dwell*
" *in Houses of Clay*; whose Original is from the
" Dust, and whose State is all Imperfection!"

I WOULD observe from hence, the very singular Necessity of that *Poverty* of *Spirit*, which intirely *renounces* it's own Attainments; and most thankfully *submits* to the Righteousness of the incarnate GOD.—To inculcate this Lesson, the Son of the Blessed came down from Heaven; and pressed no other Principle, with so repeated * an Importunity, on his Hearers. To instil the same Doctrine, the HOLY GHOST touched the Lips of the Apostles with sacred Eloquence; and made it an eminent Part of their Commission, " to demolish every high Imagination." That no

* It is well worthy of our Observation, says an excellent Commentator, " That no one Sentence ut-
" tered by our LORD, is so frequently repeated as
" this; *Whosoever shall exalt himself, shall be abased*;
" *and he that shall humble himself, shall be exalted.*"
Which *often* occurs in the Evangelists; but is *never* duly accomplished in Us, till We disclaim all Pretension to Merit and Righteousness of our own, and seek them only in the Atonement and Obedience of JESUS CHRIST.

no Expedient might be wanting, to give it a deep and lasting Efficacy on the human Mind; a Phantom arises from the Valley of the Shadow of Death, or a Teacher descends from the Habitation of Spirits.—Whatever then we neglect; let us not neglect to cultivate *this Grace*, which has been so variously taught, so powerfully enforced.

HARK! a *doleful Voice*—With sudden Starts, and hideous Screams, it disturbs the Silence of the peaceful Night. 'Tis the *Screech-owl*, sometimes in frantic, sometimes in disconsolate Accents, uttering her Woes *. She flies the vocal Grove, and shuns the Society of all the feathered Choir. The blooming Gardens, and flowery Meads, have no Charms for her. Obscene Shades, ragged Ruins, and Walls overgrown with Ivy, are her favourite Haunts. Above, the moulder-ing Precipice nods, and threatens a Fall: be-low, the Toad crawls, or the poisonous Adder hisses. The sprightly Morning, which awakens other Animals into Joy, administers no Pleasure to

* *Solaque culminibus ferali carmine bubo*
Sæpe queri, longaſque in fletum ducere voces.

Thus sung that charming Genius, that Prince of the antient Poets, that most consummate Master of Elegance and Accuracy; all whose *Sentiments* are Nature, whose every *Description* is a Picture, whose whole *Language* is Music—VIRGIL.

to this glooming Recluſe. Even the ſmiling Face of Day, is her Averſion; and all it's lovely Scenes, create nothing but Uneaſineſs.

So, juſt ſo, would it fare with the *Ungodly*; were it poſſible to ſuppoſe their Admiſſion, into the chaſte and bright Abodes of endleſs Felicity. They would find nothing but Diſappointment and Shame, even at the Fountain-Head of Happineſs and Honour.—For how could the Tongue, habituated to *Profaneneſs*, taſte any Delight in the harmonious Adorations of Heaven? How could the Lips, cankered with *Slander*, reliſh the Raptures of everlaſting Praiſe? Where would be the Satisfaction of the *vain* Beauty, or the *ſupercilious* Grandee? Since, in the Temple of the Skies, no Incenſe of Flattery would be addreſſed to the former, nor any obſequious Homage paid to the latter. The ſpotleſs and inconceivable Purity of the bleſſed GOD, would *flaſh* Confuſion on the laſcivious Eye. The envious Mind, muſt be on a *Rack* of ſelf-tormenting *Paſſions*; to obſerve Millions of happy Beings, ſhining in the Perfections of Glory, and ſolacing themſelves in the Fulneſs of Joy.—In ſhort; the unſanctified Soul, amidſt holy and triumphant Spirits; even in the refined Regions of Bliſs and Immortality; would be like this melancholy Bird, *diſlodged* from her darkſome Retirement,

Retirement, and *imprisoned* under the Beams of Day *.

THE Voice of this Creature screaming at our Windows, or of the Raven croaking over our Houses, is, they say, a *Token* of approaching *Death*. There are Persons, who would regard such an Incident, with no small Degree of Solicitude. Trivial as it is; it would damp their Spirits, perhaps, break their Rest.—One cannot but wonder, that People should suffer themselves to be affrighted at such *fantastical*, and yet be quite unaffected with *real*, Presages of their Dissolution. Real Presages of this awful Event,

* I would beg of the Reader to observe, with what *Emphasis* and *Propriety* our LORD touches this important Point, in his memorable Reply to *Nicodemus*. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a Man be born again, He* CANNOT *enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*; q. d. "I wave the *Authority* of the Supreme "Judge, and speak with the *Condescension* of a Teacher "in *Israel*. Though I might, without being liable to "the least Controul, pass it into a sovereign Decree; "That unrenewed Mortals, who are Slaves to corrupt "Appetite, SHALL NOT enter the Habitations of the "Just; I rather choose to represent it, as a Case *utterly impossible*; and charge the Calamity, not upon "Divine Severity, but upon human Folly. Such Persons from the very Nature of Things, preclude "themselves; they incapacitate their own Minds; "and Contrarieties must be reconciled, before *They*, "in their unregenerate Condition, *can* be Partakers of "those spiritual and sublime Delights." *John* iii. 3.

Event, addreſs us from every Quarter. What are theſe *incumbent Glooms*, which overwhelm the World, but a kind of *Pall* provided for Nature; and an Image of that long Night, which will quickly cover the Inhabitants of the whole Earth? What an Affinity has the Sleep*, which will very ſoon weigh down my drowſy Eye-lids, with that State of intire Ceſſation, in which all my Senſes muſt be laid aſide! The ſilent Chamber, and the Bed of Slumber, are a very ſignificant Repreſentation of the Land, where all Things are huſhed; all Things are forgotten.—What meant that deep *Death-Bell Note*, which, the other Evening, ſaddened the Air? Laden with heavieſt Accents, it ſtruck our Ears, and ſeemed to knock at the Door of our Hearts. Surely, it brought a Meſſage to ſurviving Mortals, and thus the Tidings ran: "Mortals, the Deſtroyer "of your Race is on his Way. The laſt Ene-"my has begun the Purſuit; and is gaining "Ground upon you, every Moment. His "Paths are ſtrewed with Heaps of Slain. Even "now his Javelin has laid one of your Neigh-"bours in the Duſt; and will ſoon, very ſoon, "aim the *inevitable Blow* at each of your Lives."

We need not go down to the Charnel-Houſe, nor carry our Search into the Repoſitories of the Dead;

* *Et Conſanguineus Lethi Sopor.* Virg.

Dead; in order to find Memorials of our impending Doom. A Multitude of these Remembrancers are planted in all our Paths, and point the heedless Passengers to their long Home. I can hardly enter a considerable Town, but I meet the funeral Procession, or the Mourners going about the Streets. The *Hatchment* suspended on the Wall, or the *Crape* streaming in the Air, are silent Intimations; that both *Rich* and *Poor* have been emptying their Houses, and replenishing their Sepulchres. I can scarce join in any Conversation, but mention is made of some that are given over by the Physician, and hovering on the Confines of Eternity; of others, that have just dropt their Clay amidst weeping Friends, and are gone to appear before the Judge of all the Earth. There's not a *News-Paper* comes to my Hand; but amidst all it's entertaining Narrations, reads several serious *Lectures* of *Mortality*. What else are the repeated Accounts—of Age, worn out by slow-consuming Sicknesses—of Youth, dashed to Pieces by some sudden Stroke of Casualty—of Patriots, exchanging their Seats in the Senate, for a Lodging in the Tomb—of Misers, resigning their Breath, and (O relentless Destiny!) leaving their very Riches for others? Even the Vehicles of our Amusement, are Registers of the Deceased;

and

and the Voice of *Fame* seldom sounds, but in Concert with a *Knell*.

THESE Monitors croud every Place; not so much as the Scenes of our Diversion excepted. What are the Decorations of our public Buildings, and the most elegant Furniture of our Parlours; but the Imagery of Death, and Trophies of the Tomb? That marble Bust; and those gilded Pictures; how solemnly they *recognize* the Fate of others, and speakingly *remind* us of our own!—I see, I hear, and O! I feel this great Truth. It is interwoven with my Constitution. The frequent Decays of the Structure foretel it's final Ruin. What are all the Pains, that have been darted through my Limbs; what every Disease, that has assaulted my Health; but the *advanced Guards* of the Foe? What are the Languors and Weariness, that attend the Labours of each revolving Day; but the more *secret Practices* of the Adversary, slowly undermining the earthly Tabernacle?

AMIDST so many Notices, shall we go on thoughtless and unconcerned? Can none of these Prognostics, which are sure as Oracles, awaken our Attention, and engage our Circumspection? *Noah*, 'tis written, *being warned of GOD, prepared an Ark.* Imitate, my Soul, imitate this excellent Example. Admonished by such a Cloud of

of Witneſſes, be continually putting thyſelf in a Readineſs for the laſt Change. Let not that Day, of which thou haſt ſo many infallible Signs, come upon thee unawares.—Get the *Ivy untwined*, and thy Affections diſentangled from this inchanting World; that thou may'ſt be able to quit it, without Reluctance. Get the dreadful *Hand-writing cancelled*, and all thy Sins blotted out; that thou may'ſt depart in Peace, and have nothing to fear at the deciſive Tribunal. Get, O! get thyſelf intereſted in the Redeemer's *Merits*, and transformed into his ſacred *Image*; then, ſhalt Thou be meet for the Inheritance of Saints in Light, and may'ſt even deſire to be diſſolved, and to be with CHRIST.

SOMETIMES, in my Evening Walk, I have heard

——— *The wakeful Bird*
Sing darkling, and, in ſhadieſt Covert hid,
Tune her nocturnal Note *.

How different the *Airs* of this charming Songſter, from thoſe harſh and boding *Outcries!* The little Creature ran through all the Variations of Muſic; and ſhewed herſelf Miſtreſs of every Grace, which conſtitutes or embelliſhes Harmony.—Sometimes, ſhe ſwells a manly Throat, and

* MILT. *Par. Loſt*, B. III. l. 38.

and her Song kindles into Ardor. The Tone is ſo *bold*, and ſtrikes with ſuch Energy, you would imagine the ſprightly Serenader in the very next Thicket. Anon, the Strain *languiſhes*, and the mournful Warbler melts into Tenderneſs. The melancholy Notes juſt ſteal upon the Shades, and faintly touch your Ear; or, in ſoft and ſadly-pleaſing Accents, they ſeem to die along the diſtant Vale. Silence is pleaſed, and Night liſtens to the trilling Tale.

WHAT an Invitation is this, to ſlip away from the thronged City! This coy and modeſt Minſtrel, entertains only the *Lovers* of *Retirement*. Thoſe, who are carouſing over their Bowls, or ranting at the riotous Club, loſe this Feaſt of Harmony.—In like manner, the Pleaſures of Religion, and the Joy of Reconciliation with GOD; the Satisfactions ariſing, from an eſtabliſhed Intereſt in CHRIST, and from the Proſpect of a bliſsful Immortality; theſe are all loſt to the Mind, that is ever *in the Croud*; and dares not, or delights not, to retire into itſelf.—Are we charmed with the Nightingale's Song? Do we wiſh to have it nearer, and hear it oftener? Let us ſeek a renewed Heart, and a reſigned Will; a Conſcience that whiſpers Peace, and Paſſions that are tuned by Grace. Then, ſhall we never want a Melody in our own Breaſts, far more *muſically pleaſing*, than ſweet *Philomela*'s ſweeteſt Strains.

As different as the Voices of these Birds, are the *Circumstances* of those few Persons, who continue awake.—Some are squandering, Pearls shall I say, or Kingdoms? No; but what is unspeakably more precious, Time. Squandering this inestimable Talent, with the most senseless and wanton Prodigality. Not content with allowing a few *spare Minutes*, for the Purpose of necessary Recreation; they lavish many Hours, devote *whole Nights*; to that idle Diversion of shuffling, ranging, and detaching a Set of painted Pasteboards.—Others, instead of this busy Trifling, act the Part of their own Tormentors. They even piquet themselves *, and call it Amusement; they are torn by wild Horses, yet term it a Sport. What else is the *Gamester*'s Practice? His Mind is stretched on the Tenter-Hooks of anxious Suspence, and agitated by the fiercest Extremes of Hope and Fear? While the Dice are rattling, his Heart is throbbing; his Fortune is tottering; and, possibly at the very next Throw, the one sinks in the Gulf of Ruin, the other is hurried into the Rage of Distraction.

Some, snatched from the Bloom of Health, and the Lap of Plenty, are confined to the *Chamber* of *Sickness*. Where they are constrained, either

* Alluding to a very painful Punishment, inflicted on Delinquents among the Soldiery.

either to plunge into the everlasting World, in an unprepared Condition or else (sad Alternative!) to think over all the Follies of a heedless Life, and all the Bitterness of approaching Death. The Disease rages; it baffles the Force of Medicine; and urges the reluctant Wretch, to the Brink of the Precipice. While Furies rouse the Conscience, and point at the bottomless Pit below.—Perhaps, his *drooping Mother*, deprived long ago of the Husband of her Bosom, and bereft of all her other Offspring; is, even now, receiving the Blow which consummates her Calamities *. In vain, she tries to

* This brings to my Mind one of the deepest *Mourning Pieces*, extant in the Productions of the Pen. The sacred Historian paints it, in all the Simplicity of Stile, yet with all the Strength of Colouring.—When *JESUS came nigh to the Gate of the City, behold! there was a dead Man carried out, the only Son of his Mother, and she was a Widow.*—What a Gradation is here! How pathetically beautiful! every fresh Circumstance, widens the Wound; aggravates the Calamity; till the Description is worked up into the most finished Picture of exquisite and inconsolable Distress.—He was a *young Man:* cut off in the Flower of Life, amidst a thousand gay Expectations, and smiling Hopes. A Son; an *only* Son; the afflicted Mother's All. So that none remained to preserve the Name, or perpetuate the Family. What rendered the Case still more deplorable, *She was a Widow:* left intirely desolate; abandoned to her Woes; without any to share her

to aſſwage the Sorrows of a beloved Son; in vain, ſhe attempts, with her tender Offices, to prolong a Life, dearer than her own. He faints in her Arms; he bows his Head; he ſinks in Death. Fatal, doubly fatal, that laſt expiring Pang? While it diſlodges the unwilling Soul, it rends an *only Child*, from the yearning Embraces of a Parent; and tears away the Support of her Age, from a diſconſolate Widow.

WHILE *Thoſe* long for a Reprieve; *Others* invite the Stroke. Quite weary of the World, with a reſtleſs Impatience, they ſigh for Diſſolution. Some, pining away under the tedious Decays of an incurable *Conſumption*; or gaſping for Breath, and almoſt ſuffocated, by an Inundation of *dropſical* Waters. On ſome, a relentleſs *Cancer* has faſtened it's envenomed Teeth; and is gnawing them, though in the midſt of bodily Vigour, in the midſt of pitying Friends, gradually to Death. Others are on a Rack of Agonies, by convulſive Fits of the *Stone*. O! how the Pain writhes their Limbs; how the Sweat bedews their Fleſh; and their Eye-balls wildly roll! Methinks, the Night condoles with theſe her diſtreſſed Children; and ſheds dewy

5 Tears,

Sorrows, or to comfort her under the irreparable Loſs —Is not this a fine Sketch of the *Impaſſioned* and *Picturesque?* Who can conſider the Narrative, with any Attention; and not feel his Heart penetrated, with a tender Commiſeration? *Luke* vii. 12.

Tears, over their ſorrowful Abodes.—But of all Mortals, *They* are the moſt exquiſively miſerable, who groan beneath the Preſſure of a *melancholy* Mind; or ſmart under the Laſhes of a *reſentful* Conſcience. Though robed in Ermine; or covered with Jewels; the State of a Slave chained to the Gallies, or of an Exile condemned to the Mines, is a perfect Paradiſe compared with theirs.

O! that the *Votaries* of *Mirth*; whoſe Life is a continued Round of Merriment and Whim; would beſtow one ſerious Reflection, on this *Variety* of human *Woes!* It might teach them to be leſs enamoured, with the few languid Sweets; that are thinly ſcattered through this Vale of Tears, and environed with ſuch a Multitude of ragged Thorns. It might teach them, no longer to dance away their Years, with a giddy *rambling Impulſe*; but to aſpire, with a determined Aim, after thoſe happy Regions, where Delights, abundant and unembittered, flow.

CAN there be Circumſtances, which a Man of Wiſdom would more earneſtly deprecate, than theſe ſeveral Inſtances of grievous Tribulation? There are; and, what is very aſtoniſhing, they are frequently the Deſire and the Choice of Thoſe, who fanſy themſelves the ſole Heirs of Happineſs. Thoſe I mean, who are launching out into the Depths of *Extravagance*, and running

exceſſive Lengths of *Riot:* who are proſtituting their Reputation, and ſacrificing their Peace, to the Gratification of their Luſts; ſapping the Foundation of their Health, in Debaucheries; or ſhipwrecking the Intereſts of their Families, in their Bowls. And, what is worſe, are forfeiting the Joys of an eternal Heaven, for the *ſordid* Satisfactions of the Beaſt; for the *tranſitory* Senſations of an Hour.—Ye Slaves of Appetite, how far am I from envying your groſs Senſualities, and voluptuous Revels! Little, ah! little are you ſenſible; that, while Indulgence ſhowers her Roſes, and Luxury diffuſes her Odours; they ſcatter *Poiſons* alſo, and ſhed unheeded *Bane* *. Evils, incomparably more malignant, than the Wormwood and Gall of the ſharpeſt Affliction. —Since Death is in the Drunkard's Cup; and worſe than Poinards in the Harlot's Embrace; may it ever be the Privilege of the Man whom I love, to go without his Share of theſe *poſtilent Sweets* †!

ABUN-

* *Yes; in the Flow'rs that wreathe the ſparkling Bowl,*
Fell Adders hiſs, and pois'nous Serpents roll.

† *Quam ſuave eſt ſuavitatibus iſtis carere!* Was St. *Auguſtine*'s pious Exclamation. The Subſtance of which Mr. *Pope* has expreſſed, with more Simplicity, and with no leſs Dignity.

Count all th' Advantage proſp'rous Vice attains,
'Tis but what Virtue flies from, and diſdains.

ABUNDANCE of living Sparks glitter in the Lanes, and twinkle under the Hedges. I ſuppoſe, they are the *Glow-worms*; which have lighted their little Lamps, and obtained Leave, through the Abſence of the Sun, to play a feeble Beam. A faint Glimmer, juſt ſerves to render them perceivable; without tending at all to diſſipate the Shades, or making any Amends for the departed Day.—Should ſome weather-beaten Traveler, dropping with Wet, and ſhivering with Cold, hover round this *Mimicry* of *Fire*; in order to dry his Garments, and warm his benumbed Limbs. Should ſome bewildered Traveler; groping for his Way, in a ſtarleſs Night and trackleſs Deſart; take one of theſe *languid Tapers*, as a Light to his Feet, and a Lantern to his Paths. How certainly would both the one, and the other, be fruſtrated of their Expectation!—And are *They* more likely to ſucceed, who, neglecting that ſovereign Balm, which diſtilled from the Croſs; apply any *carnal* Diverſion, to heal the Anxiety of the Mind? Who, deaf to the infallible Deciſions of Revelation; reſign themſelves over to the erroneous *Conjectures* of *Reaſon*, in order to find the Way that leadeth unto Life? Or laſtly, who have Recourſe to the *Froth* of this vain World, for a ſatisfactory Portion, and a ſubſtantial Happineſs? Their Conduct

is in no Degree wiſer; their Diſappointment equally ſure; and their Miſcarriage infinitely more diſaſtrous. To ſpeak in the delicate Language of a ſacred Writer, "they ſow the Wind, and "will reap the Whirlwind *."

To ſpeak more plainly; the Pleaſures of the World, which we are *All* ſo prone to dote upon; and the Powers of fallen Reaſon, which *Some* are ſo apt to idolize †; are not only vain, but treacherous. Not only a *painted Flame*, like theſe ſparkling Animals; but much like thoſe unctuous Exhalations, which ariſe from the marſhy Ground,

* Hoſ. viii. 7.

† I hope, it will be obſerved, That I am far from decrying that noble Faculty of Reaſon, when exerted in her proper Sphere; when acting in a *deferential Subordination* to the revealed Will of Heaven. While She exerciſes her Powers, within theſe appointed Limits, She is unſpeakably ſerviceable; and cannot be too induſtriouſly cultivated —But, when ſhe ſets up herſelf in *proud Contradiſtinction* to the ſacred Oracles; when, all arrogant and ſelf-ſufficient, She ſays to the Word of Scripture, *I have no Need of Thee:* She is then, I muſt be bold to maintain, not only a Glow-worm, but an *Ignis fatuus*; not only a Bubble, but a Snare.

May not this Remark, with the ſtricteſt Propriety; and without the leaſt Limitation; be applied to the *Generality* of our modern Romances, Novels, and theatrical Entertainments? Theſe are commonly calculated, to inflame a wanton Fancy. Or, if conducted with ſo much Modeſty, as not to debauch

Ground, and often dance before the Eyes of the benighted Way-faring Man. Kindled into a ſort of Fire, they perſonate a Guide, and ſeem to offer their Service: but, blazing with *deluſive Light*, miſlead their Follower into hidden Pits, headlong Precipices, and unfathomable Gulfs. Where, far from his beloved Friends, far from all Hopes of Succour, the unhappy Wanderer is ſwallowed up, and loſt.

NOT long ago, we obſerved a very ſurpriſing Appearance in the Weſtern Sky. A *prodigious Star* took it's flaming Route thro' thoſe Coaſts; and trailed, as it paſſed, a tremendous Length of Fire, almoſt over half the Heavens. Some, I imagine, viewed the portentous Stranger, with much the ſame anxious Amazement; as *Belſhazzar* beheld the Hand-writing upon the Wall. Some looked upon it as a *bloody* * *Flag*; hung out by Divine Reſentment, over a guilty World. Some read, in it's glaring Viſage, the Fate of Nations,

debauch the Affections; they pervert the Judgment, and bewilder the Taſte. By their incredible Adventures; their extravagant Parade of Gallantry; and their Characters, widely different from Truth and Nature; they inſpire fooliſh Conceits: beget idle Expectations: introduce a Diſguſt of genuine Hiſtory; and indiſpoſe their Admirers, to acquieſce in the *decent* Civilities, or to reliſh the *ſober* Satisfactions, of common Life.

* —*Liquida ſi quando nocte cometæ*
Sanguinei lugubre *rubent*.— VIRG.

tions, and the Fall of Kingdoms *. To others, it ſhook, or ſeemed to ſhake, *Peſtilence* and *War* from it's horrid Hair.—For my Part; I am not ſo ſuperſtitious as to regard, what every Aſtrologer has to prognoſticate; upon the Acceſſion of a *Comet*, or the Projection of it's huge *vapoury Train*. Nothing can be more precarious, and unjuſtifiable, than to draw ſuch Concluſions from ſuch Events: Since they neither are preternatural Effects, nor do they throw the Frame of Things into any Diſorder. I would rather adore that omnipotent Being, who rolled thoſe ſtupendous Orbs from his creating Hand; and leads them, by his providential Eye, through unmeaſurable Tracts of Æther. Who bids them, now, approach the Sun, and glow with unſufferable Ardor †; now, retreat to the utmoſt Bounds of our Planetary Syſtem, and make their Entry among other Worlds.

THEY are harmleſs Viſitants. I acquit them from the Charge of cauſing, or being acceſſory to deſolating Plagues. Would to GOD, there were no

* —— *Crinemque timendi*
Sideris, & terris mutantem regna *cometem.*
LUCAN.

† "The Comet in the Year 1680, according to "Sir *Iſaac Newton*'s Computation, was, in it's "neareſt Approach, above 166 Times nearer the "Sun than the Earth is. Conſequently, it's Heat "was then 28000 Times greater than that of Sum-"mer. So that a Ball of Iron as big as the Earth, "heated by it, would hardly become cool in 50000 "Years." DERH. *Aſtr. Theol.* p. 237.

no other more formidable Indications, of *approaching Judgments* or *impending Ruin!* But, alas! when Vice becomes predominant, and Irreligion almoſt epidemical: when the Sabbaths of a jealous GOD, are notoriouſly profaned; and that "Name, which is great, wonderful, and holy," is proſtituted to the meaneſt, or abuſed to the moſt execrable Purpoſes: when the Worſhip of our great Creator and Preſerver is baniſhed, from many of the moſt *conſpicuous Families*; and it is deemed a Piece of rude Impertinence, ſo much as to mention the gracious Redeemer, in our *genteel Interviews:* when it paſſes for an elegant Freedom of Behaviour, to ridicule the Myſteries of Chriſtianity; and a Species of refined Converſation, to taint the Air with laſcivious Hints: when thoſe, who ſit in the *Scorner's Chair*, ſin with a high Hand: and many of thoſe, who wear the *Profeſſor's Garb*, are deſtitute of the Power, and content themſelves with the mere Form of Godlineſs: when ſuch is the State of a Community, there is Reaſon, too apparent Reaſon, to be horribly afraid. Such *Phænomena*, abounding in the moral World, are not fanſiful, but real Omens. Will not an injured GOD "be avenged on ſuch "a Nation as this?" Will he not be provoked, to "ſweep it with the Beſom of Deſtruction*?"

O!

* *Iſa.* xiv. 23. The Eternal Sovereign, ſpeaking of *Babylon*, denounces this Threatening, *I will ſweep it*

O! THAT the Inhabitants of *Great-Britain* would lay these alarming Considerations to Heart! The LORD of Hosts has commanded the Sword of *civil Discord*, to return into it's Sheath. But have we returned, every one from his *evil Ways?* Are we become a renewed People; devoted to a dying Saviour; and zealous of good Works?—What mean those Peals of Sobs, which burst from the *expiring Cattle?* What mean those melancholy Moans, where the lusty Droves were wont to low *? What mean those Arrows of untimely Death, discharged on our innocent and useful Animals?

NO Wantonness or Sloth, has vitiated the Blood of these laborious, temperate Creatures. They have contracted no Disease, from unseasonable Indulgences, and inordinate Revelings. The pure Stream is their Drink; the simple Herb their Repast. Neither Care disturbs their Sleep, nor Passion inflames their Breast. Whence then are they visited with such

it with the Bosom of Destruction.—What a noble but dreadful Image, is here! How strongly and awfully pourtrayed! How pregnant also in it's Signification! Intimating the *vile Nature*, and expressing the *total Extirpation*, of this wicked People; at the same Time, suggesting the *perfect Ease*, with which the righteous GOD would execute his intended Vengeance.

* If these Papers should be so happy as to out-live their Author; perhaps, it may be needful to inform Posterity, that the above-mentioned Hints, allude to a most terrible, contagious, and mortal *Distemper*; raging among the *horned Cattle*, in various Parts of the Kingdom.

ſuch terrible Diſorders, as no Prudence can prevent, nor any Medicines heal?—Surely, theſe Calamities are the Weapons of Divine Diſpleaſure, and manifeſt Chaſtiſements of an evil Generation *. Surely GOD, the "GOD to whom "Vengeance belongeth," has ſtill a Controverſy with our ſinful Land. And who can tell, where the Viſitation will end? What a Storm may follow theſe preluſive Drops?—O! that we may "hear the Rod, and who hath appointed it!" Taught by theſe *penal Effects* of our Diſobedience, may we remove the *accurſed Thing* †, from our Tents; our Practices; our Hearts! May we turn from all Ungodlineſs, before Wrath come upon us to the uttermoſt; before Iniquity prove our Ruin!

SOMETIMES, at this Hour, another moſt remarkable Sight amuſes the Curious, and alarms the Vulgar. A Blaze of lambent Meteors is kindled, or ſome very extraordinary *Lights* are refracted, *in the* Quarters of the *North*.—The Streams of Radiance, like Legions ruſhing to the Engagement, meet and mingle; inſomuch, that the Air ſeems to be all conflicting Fire. Within a while they ſtart from one another;

* Hinc *lætis vituli vulgo moriuntur in herbis,*
Et dulces animas plena ad præſepia reddunt.
Balatu hinc *pecorum, & crebris mugitibus amnes,*
Arenteſque ſonant ripæ, colleſque ſupini. VIRG.

† Joſh. vi. 18.

ther; and, like Legions in precipitate Flight, ſweep, each a ſeparate Way, through the Firmament. Now, they are quieſcent; anon, they are thrown into a quivering Motion; preſently, the whole Horizon is illuminated with the glancing Flames. Sometimes, with an Aſpect *awfully ludicrous*, they repreſent extravagant and antic Vagaries. At other Times, you would ſuſpect, that ſome inviſible Hand was playing off the dumb *Artillery* of the *Skies*; and, by a ſtrange Expedient, giving us the Flaſh, without the Roar.

THE Villagers gaze at the Spectacle, firſt with Wonder, then with Horror. A general *Panic* ſeizes the Country. Every Heart throbs, and every Face is pale. The Crouds that flock together, inſtead of diminiſhing, increaſe the Dread. They catch Contagion from each other's Looks and Words; while Fear is in every Eye, and every Tongue ſpeaks the Language of Terror. Some ſee *hideous Shapes*; Armies mixing in fierce Encounter, or Fields ſwimming with Blood. Some foreſee *direful Events*; States overthrown, or mighty Monarchs tottering on their Thrones. Others, ſcared with ſtill more frightful Apprehenſions, think of nothing but the *Day* of *Doom*. "Sure, ſays one, the unalterable Hour is ſtruck, "and the End of all Things come.—See, re- "plies another, how the blaſted Stars look wan! "Are not theſe the Signs of the Son of Man, "coming in the Clouds of Heaven?—JESUS

" prepare us (cries a Third, and lifts his Eyes " in Devotion) for the Archangel's Trump, and " the great Tribunal!"

IF this *waving Brightneſs*, which plays innocently over our Heads, be ſo amazing to Multitudes; what inexpreſſible Conſternation muſt overwhelm unthinking Mortals, when the *general Conflagration* commences! The Day, the dreadful Day, is approaching; " *In the which the* " *Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great Noiſe* *, " *and*

* 2 *Pet.* iii. 10. I have often thought this Verſe an eminent Inſtance of that Kind of beautiful Writing, in which the very *Sound* bears a Sort of *Significancy*; at leaſt, carries an exact Correſpondence with the Senſe. The orignal Expreſſion—ροιζηδον—is one of the hoarſeſt and deepeſt Words in Language. Nothing could be more exquiſitely adapted to affect the *Ear*, as well as impreſs the *Imagination*, with the Wreck of Nature, and the Craſh of a falling World—I ſcarce ever read this Clauſe, but it brings to my Mind that admired Deſcription in MILTON:

——On a ſudden open fly,
With impetuous Recoil, and *jarring Sound*,
Th' infernal Doors, and on their Hinges *grate*
Harſh Thunder.—— Book II. l. 879.

It is a pleaſing Employ, and a very laudable Office of true Criticiſm, to point out theſe inferior Recommendations of the *Sacred Claſſics*. Though, I believe, the inſpired Writers themſelves, amidſt all the Elevation and Magnificence of their Divine Ideas, diſdained a ſcrupulous Attention to ſuch *little Niceties* of Stile.

" *and the Elements ſhall melt with fervent Heat*; " *the Earth alſo, and all the Works that are* " *therein, ſhall be burnt up.*" That mighty Hand, which once opened the Windows from on High, and broke up the Fountains of the great Deep, will then unlock all the *Magazines* of *Fire*, and pour a *Second Deluge* upon the Earth. The vengeful Flames, kindled by the Breath of the Almighty, ſpread themſelves from the Centre to the Circumference. Nothing can withſtand their Impetuoſity; nothing can eſcape their Rage. Univerſal Deſolation attends their Progreſs. Magnificent Palaces, and ſolemn Temples, are laid in Aſhes. Spacious Cities, and impregnable Towers, are mingled in one ſmoking Maſs. Not only the Productions of *human Art*, but the Works of *Almighty Power*, are Fuel for the devouring Element. The everlaſting Mountains melt, like the Snows which cover their Summit. Even vaſt Oceans, ſerve only to augment the inconceivable Rapidity and Fury of the Blaze.—O! how ſhall I, or others, ſtand undiſmayed amidſt the Glare of a *burning World*; unleſs the LORD JEHOVAH be our Defence? How ſhall we be upheld in Security, when the Globe itſelf is ſinking in a *fiery Ruin*; unleſs the Rock of Ages be our Support?

BEHOLD!

BEHOLD! a new Spectacle of Wonder! The *Moon* is making her Entry on the eastern Sky. See her rising in clouded Majesty! Opening, as it were, and asserting her original Commission, to *rule over the Night*. All grand and stately, but somewhat sullied is her Aspect. However, she *brightens*, as she *advances*; and grows clearer, as she climbs higher. Till, at length, her Silver loses all it's Dross; she unveils her peerless Light; and becomes "the Beauty of Heaven, the Glory of the "Stars *;" delighting every Eye, and chearing the whole World, with the Brightness of her Appearance, and the Softness of her Splendors.—O! thou Queen of the Shades! may it be my Ambition, to follow this thy instructive Example! While others are fond to transcribe the Fashions of little Courts, and to mimic Personages of inferior State; be it mine, to imitate thy *improving Purity!* May my Conduct become more unblemished, and my Temper more refined; as I proceed farther and farther, in my probationary Course! May every sordid Desire wear away, and every irregular Appetite be gradually lost; as I make nearer Approaches, to the celestial Mansions!—Will not this be a comfortable Evidence, that I too shall shine, in my adored Redeemer's Kingdom? Shine, with a *richer* Lustre, than that which radiates from thy

 resplen-

* Ecclus xliii. 9.

——— *Lucidum cæli decus.* HOR.

reſplendent Orb: ſhine, with an *unfading* Luſtre, when every Ray, that beams from thy beauteous Sphere, is totally extinguiſhed?

THE Day afforded us a Variety of entertaining Sights. Theſe were all withdrawn, at the Acceſſion of Darkneſs. The Stars, kindly officious, immediately lent us their Aid. This ſerved to *alleviate* the Frown of Night; rather than to *recover* the Objects from their Obſcurity. A faint Ray, ſcarcely reflected, and not from the intire Surface of Things, gave the ſtraining Eye a very imperfect Glimpſe; ſuch as rather mocked, than ſatisfied Viſion.—Now the Moon is riſen, and has collected all her Beams, the Veil is taken off from the Countenance of Nature. I ſee the recumbent Flocks; I ſee the green Hedge-Rows, though without the feathered Choriſters, hopping from Spray to Spray. In ſhort, I ſee once again the World's great Picture: not indeed in it's late lively Colours, but more *delicately ſhaded*, and arrayed in *ſofter Charms* *.

WHAT a *majeſtic Scene* is here! Incomparably grand, and exquiſitely fine!—The Moon, like an immenſe cryſtal Lamp, pendent in the magnificent Cieling of the Heavens. The Stars, like ſo many Thouſands of golden Tapers, fixed in their azure Sockets. All pouring their Luſtre

* —— Now reigns
Full orb'd the Moon, and with more pleaſing Light
Shadowy ſets off the Face of Things.— MILT.

Luſtre on ſpacious Cities, and lofty Mountains; glittering on the Ocean; gleaming on the Foreſt; and opening a Proſpect, wide as the Eye can glance, more various than Fancy cant paint *.— We are forward to admire the Performances of human Art. A Landſcape, elegantly deſigned, and executed with a maſterly Hand; a Piece of Statuary, which ſeems, amidſt all the Recommendations of exact Proportion, and graceful Attitude, to ſoften into Fleſh, and almoſt breathe with Life; theſe little *Imitations* of Nature, we behold with a pleaſing Surpriſe. And ſhall we be

* *As when the Moon, refulgent Lamp of Night,*
O'er Heav'n's clear Azure ſpreads her ſacred Light;
When not a Breath diſturbs the deep Serene,
And not a Cloud o'ercaſts the ſolemn Scene:
Around her Throne the vivid Planets roll,
And Stars unnumber'd gild the glowing Pole;
O'er the dark Trees a yellower Verdure ſhed,
And tip with Silver ev'ry Mountain's Head;
Then ſhine the Vales; the Rocks in Proſpect riſe;
A Flood of Glory burſts from all the Skies;
The conſcious Swains, rejoicing in the Sight,
Eye the blue Vault, and bleſs the uſeful Light.
Iliad VIII.

I tranſcribe theſe Lines, becauſe Mr. *Pope* ſays, they exhibit, in the Original, the fineſt *Night-Piece* in Poetry. And, if they are ſo beautiful in *Homer*'s Language; who can ſuſpect their ſuffering any Diſadvantage, from the Pen of his admirable *Tranſlator*?

leſs affected, leſs delighted, with the inexpreſſibly noble, and completely finiſhed *Original!* —The ample Dimenſions of *Ranelagh*'s Dome; the gay Illuminations of *Vaux-Hall* Grove; I ſhould ſcorn to mention on ſuch an Occaſion, were they not the Objects of general Admiration. Shall we be charmed with thoſe puny Eſſays of finite Ingenuity; and touched with no Tranſport, at this ſtupendous Diſplay of Omnipotent Skill? At the auguſt Grandeur, and ſhining Statelineſs, of the Firmament? which forms an Alcove for ten thouſand Worlds, and is ornamented with Myriads of everlaſting Luminaries.—Surely, this muſt betray, not only a total *Want* of *Religion*; but the moſt abject Littleneſs of Mind, and the utmoſt *Poverty* of *Genius*.

THE Moon is not barely "an *Ornament* in "the high Places of the LORD *;" but of ſignal *Service* to the Inhabitants of the Earth.—How uncomfortable is deep, pitchy, total Darkneſs! Eſpecially, in the long Abſence of the Winter's Sun. Welcome therefore, thrice welcome, this auſpicious Gift of Providence; to enliven the nocturnal Gloom, and line with Silver the raven-coloured Mantle of Night. — How deſirable to have our Summer-Evenings illuminated! That we may be able to tread the dewy Meads, and breathe the delicious Fragance of

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4 * Eccles xliii. 9.

our Gardens; especially, when the sultry Heats render it irksome and fatiguing, to walk abroad by Day.—How chearing to the *Shepherd*, the Use of this universal Lantern; as He tends his fleecy Charge, or late consigns them to their hurdled Cots! How comfortable and how advantageous to the *Mariner*, as he ploughs the Midnight Main; to adjust the Tackling, to explore his Way, and, under the Influence of this beaming Sconce, to avoid the fatal Rock!—For these, and other beneficial Purposes, the Hand of the ALMIGHTY has hung the *stately Branch* on high; and filled it with a Splendor, not confined to a single Edifice, or commensurate to a particular Square, but diffusive as the whole Extent of the Hemisphere.

THE most faithful of our inferior Servants, are sometimes tardy in their Office; sometimes negligent of their Duty. But this celestial Attendant is most *exactly punctual*, at all the stated Periods of her Ministration. If we choose to prolong our Journey, after the Sun is gone down; the Moon, during her whole *Increase*, is always ready to act in the Capacity of a Guide. If we are inclined to set out very early in the Morning; the Moon, in her *Decrease* prevents the Dawn, on purpose, to offer her Assistance. And, because it is so pleasant a Thing, for the Eyes to behold the Light; the Moon, at her *Full*, by a Course of unintermitted Wait-

ing, gives us, as it were, a double Day.—How apparently has the Divine Wiſdom intereſted itſelf, in providing even for the *pleaſurable Accommodation* of Man! How deſirous, that He ſhould want no Piece of commodious Furniture; no Kind of delightful Convenience! And, in Proſecution of theſe benevolent Intentions, has annexed ſo valuable an Appendage to the terreſtrial Globe.—Juſtly, therefore, does the Pſalmiſt celebrate that admirable Conſtitution, which ordained *the Moon and the Stars to govern the Night*, as an Inſtance of rich Goodneſs *and of Mercy which endureth for ever* *.

THE Moon, it is confeſſed, is *no luminous* Body. All the Brightneſs, which beautifies her Countenance, is originally in the Sun, and no more than tranſmiſſively in her. That glorious Orb is the Parent of Day, and the Palace of Light. From thence, the Morning-Star gilds her Horn †; from thence, the Planetary Circles are

* Pſal. cxxxvi. 9.

† I might, to juſtify this Expreſſion, obſerve, that the Planet *Venus*, commonly called the Morning-Star, is found, by our Teleſcopes, frequently to appear *horned*; or to have a *Creſcent* of Light, ſomewhat like the Moon, a little before or after her Conjunction. But this would be a Remark, too deep and refined for my Scheme; which proceeds only upon a *ſuperficial* Knowledge, and the moſt *obvious* Appearances, of Nature.

are crowned with Luſtre; and from thence, the Moon derives all her ſilver Radiance.—It is pleaſing to reflect, that ſuch is the Caſe with the *all-ſufficient Redeemer*, and his *dependent People*. We are repleniſhed from his Fulneſs. What do we poſſeſs, which we have not received; and what can we deſire, which we may not expect; from that never-failing Source of all Good? He is the Author of our Faith, and the Former of our Graces. In his unſpotted Life, we ſee the Path; in his meritorious Death, the Price; and in his triumphant Reſurrection, the Proof of Bliſs and Immortality. If we offend, and fall Seven times a Day; He is the LORD our *Peace* *. If we are depraved, and our beſt Deeds very unworthy; He is the LORD our *Righteouſneſs* †. If we are blind, and even brutiſh, in heavenly Knowledge; he is the LORD our *Wiſdom* ‡: his Word diſpels the Shades; his Spirit ſcatters the intellectual Gloom; his Eye looks our Darkneſs into Day. In ſhort, we are nothing, and "CHRIST is all." Worſe than defective in ourſelves, "we are *complete* in Him." So that if we ſhine, it is with delegated Rays, and with borrowed Light. We act by a Strength, and glory in Merits, not our own!—O! may we be thoroughly ſenſible of our Dependence on the Saviour! May we conſtantly imbibe his propitious

* Judg. vi. 23. † Jer. xxiii. 6. ‡ 1 Cor. i. 30.

Beams; and never, by indulging *Unbelief*, or backſliding into *Folly*, withdraw our Souls from his benign Influences! Leſt we loſe our Comfort, and our Holineſs; as the fair Ruler of the Night loſes her Splendor, when her Urn is turned from it's Fountain *, and receives no more Communications of ſolar Effulgence.

THE Moon is inceſſantly *varying*, either in her Aſpect, or her Stages.—Sometimes, ſhe looks full upon us, and her Viſage is all Luſtre. Sometimes, ſhe appears in Profile, and ſhews us only half her enlightened Face. Anon, a radiant Creſcent but juſt adorns her Brow. Soon, it dwindles into a ſlender Streak. Till, at length, all her Beauty vaniſhes, and ſhe becomes a beamleſs Orb.—Sometimes, ſhe riſes with the *deſcending Day*; and begins her Proceſſion, amidſt admiring Multitudes. Ere long, ſhe defers her Progreſs till the *midnight Watches*; and ſteals unobſerved, upon the ſleeping World.—Sometimes, ſhe juſt enters the Edges of the Weſtern *Horizon*, and drops us a ceremonious Viſit. Within a while, ſhe ſets out on her nightly Tour, from the oppoſite Regions of the Eaſt; traverſes the whole *Hemiſphere*; and never offers to withdraw, till the more refulgent Partner of her Sway renders her Preſence unneceſſary.

* Alluding to thoſe truly poetical Lines in *Milton*,

Hither, as to their Fountain, other Stars
Repairing, in their golden Urns draw Light.
Par. Loſt, B. VII. l. 364.

ceſſary.—In a Word; ſhe is, while converſant among us, ſtill waxing or waning, and "never "continueth in one Stay."

SUCH is the Moon; and ſuch are all *ſublunary Things*; expoſed to perpetual Viciſſitudes.—How often, and how ſoon, have the faint Echoes of *Renown* ſlept in Silence, or been converted into the Clamours of Obloquy! The ſame Lips, almoſt with the ſame Breath, cry Hoſanna, and Crucify.—Have not *Riches* confeſſed their notorious Treachery, a Thouſand and a Thouſand Times? Either melting away, like Snow in our Hands, by inſenſible Degrees; or eſcaping, like a winged Priſoner from it's Cage, with a precipitate Flight.—Have we not known the Bridegroom's *Cloſet*, an Antechamber to the *Tomb*; and heard the Voice, which ſo lately pronounced the ſparkling Pair Huſband and Wife, proclaim an everlaſting Divorce; and ſeal the Decree with that ſolemn Aſſervation, "Aſhes to Aſhes, Duſt "to Duſt?"—Our *Friends*, though the Medicine of Life; our *Health*, though the Balm of Nature; are a moſt precarious Poſſeſſion. How ſoon may the firſt become a Corpſe in our Arms; and how eaſily is the laſt deſtroyed in it's Vigour!—You have ſeen, no doubt, a Set of pretty *painted Birds*, perching on your Trees, or ſporting in your Meadows. You was pleaſed with the lovely Viſitants, that brought Beauty on their Wings, and Me-

Melody in their Throats. But could you insure the *Continuance* of this agreeable Entertainment? No, truly. At the least disturbing Noise, at the least terrifying Appearance, they start from their Seats; they mount the Skies; and are gone in an Instant, are gone for ever. Would you choose to have a Happiness, which bears Date with their Arrival, and expires at their Departure? If you could not be content with a Portion, enjoyable only through such a *fortuitous Term*, not of Years, but of Moments, O! take up with nothing earthly; set your Affections on Things above; there alone is "no Variableness or Sha-"dow of turning."

JOB, is not a more illustrious Pattern of Patience, than an eminent Exemplification of this Remark.—View him in his *private Estate*. He heaps up Silver as the Dust; he washes his Steps in Butter, and the Rock pours him out Rivers of Oil.—View him in his *public Character*. Princes revere his Dignity; the Aged listen to his Wisdom; every Eye beholds him with Delight; every Tongue loads him with Blessings. —View him in his *domestic Circumstances*. On one hand, he is defended by a Troop of Sons; on the other, adorned with a Train of Daughters; and on all Sides, surrounded by "a very great House-"hold."—Never was human Felicity so consummate; never was *disastrous Revolution* so sudden.

The

The Lightning, which conſumed his Cattle, was not more terrible, and ſcarce more inſtantaneous. The joyful Parent is bereft of his Offspring, and his "Children are buried in Death." The Man of Affluence is ſtript of his Abundance; and he, who was cloathed in Scarlet, embraces the Dunghil. The venerable Patriarch is the Deriſion of Scoundrels; and the late Darling of an indulgent Providence, is become "a Brother to Dra-"gons, a Companion of Owls."—Nor need we go back to former Ages, for Proofs of this afflicting Truth. In our Times; in all Times; the Wheel continues the ſame inceſſant Whirl. And frequently thoſe, who are triumphing, To-day, in the higheſt *Elevations* of Joy; To-morrow, are bemoaning the Inſtability of mortal Affairs, in the very *Depths* of Miſery *.—Amidſt ſo much Fluctation and Uncertainty; how wretched is the Condition, which has no Anchor of the Soul,

* I believe, I may venture to apply, what the *Temanite* ſays of the Affairs of the Wicked, to all ſublunary Things; as a true Deſcription of their very *great Inſtability*. *Job* xxii. 16. נהר יוצק יסודם rendered by *Schultens*, *Flumen fuſum fundamentum eorum*. *Their Foundation* (or what they reckon their moſt ſolid and ſtable Poſſeſſion) *is a Flood poured out*. —Which is one of the boldeſt Images, and moſt poetical Beauties, I ever met with in any Language, ſacred or profane. In order to have a tolerable Conception of the Image, and a Taſte of it's Beauty; you muſt ſuppoſe a *Torrent* of Waters, ruſhing in broken

Soul, ſure and ſtedfaſt. May thy Loving-kindneſs, O GOD, be our preſent Treaſure; and thy future Glory, our reverſionary Inheritance! Then ſhall our Happineſs, not be like the full-orbed Moon, which is "a Light that *decreaſeth* "in it's Perfection;" but like the Sun, when he goeth forth in his Strength, and knoweth no other Change, but that of *ſhining more* and more unto the perfect Day.

METHINKS, in this ever-varying Sphere, I ſee a Repreſentation, not only of our temporal Advantages, but alſo of our *ſpiritual Accompliſhments*. Such, I am ſure, is what the kind Partiality of a Friend would call *my Righteouſneſs*: And ſuch, I am apt to ſuſpect *, is the Righteouſneſs

broken Cataracts, and with impetuous Rapidity, from a ſteep and craggy Mountain. Then, imagine to yourſelf an *Edifice*, built upon the Surge of this rolling Precipice; which has no other Baſis, than one of thoſe headlong *whirling Waves*. Was there ever ſuch a Repreſentation of tranſitory Proſperity, tending, with inconceivable Swiftneſs, unto Ruin? Yet ſuch is every Form of human Felicity, that is not grounded on JESUS, and a Participation of his Merits, who is the *Rock of Ages*; on JESUS, and his Image formed in our Hearts, which is the *Hope of Glory*.

* I would not be underſtood, as meaſuring, in this Reſpect, *others* by *myſelf*; but as taking my Eſtimate, from the unerring Standard of Scripture. And indeed, proceeding on this Evidence, ſupported by this

teousneſs of every Man living. Now we exerciſe it, in ſome few Inſtances; in ſome little Degrees. Anon, Sin revives, and leads our Souls into a tranſient, though unwilling Captivity. Now we are *meek*; but ſoon a ruffling Accident intervenes, and turns our Compoſure into a fretful Diſquietude. Now we are *humble*; ſoon we reflect upon ſome inconſiderable or imaginary Superiority over others, and a ſudden Elatement ſwells our Minds. Now, perhaps we poſſeſs a clean Heart, and are warm with holy Love. But O!

this Authority, I might have ventured farther than a bare *Suſpicion*. For, "there is not a *juſt* Man upon "Earth, that doeth Good, and *ſinneth not*;" ſays the Spirit of Inſpiration by *Solomon* (*Eccleſ.* vii. 20.) —Nay, ſuch is the Purity, and ſo extenſive are the Demands of the Divine Law, that an Apoſtle makes a ſtill more humbling Acknowledgment; "In *many* "Things we offend *All*." (*Jam.* iii. 2.)—And the unerring Teacher, who moſt thoroughly knew our Frame, directs the moſt advanced, moſt eſtabliſhed, and moſt watchful Chriſtians, to pray daily for the Forgiveneſs of their *daily Treſpaſſes*.—To which Teſtimonies, I beg Leave to add an elegant Paſſage from the *Canticles*; becauſe it not only expreſſes the Sentiment of this Paragraph, but illuſtrates it by the very ſame Similitude. *She* (the Church) *is fair as the Moon; clear as the Sun.* Fair as the Moon, the leſſer and changeable Light, in her *Sanctification*: Clear as the Sun, the greater and invariable Luminary, in her *Juſtification*. The inherent Holineſs of Believers being imperfect, and ſubject to many Inequalities; while their imputed Righteouſneſs is every way complete, and conſtantly like itſelf. *Cant.* vi. 10.

O! how eaſily is the Purity of our Affections ſullied! how ſoon the Fervour of our Gratitude cooled! And is there not ſomething amiſs, even in our beſt Moments? Something to be *aſhamed* of, in all we *are*; ſomething to be *repented* of, in all we *do*?

WITH what Gladneſs, therefore, and adoreing Thankfulneſs, ſhould we "ſubmit to the "Righteouſneſs of our incarnate GOD;" and *receive*, as a Divine Gift, what cannot be *acquired* by Human Works *!—A Writer of the firſt Diſtinction, and niceſt Diſcernment, ſtiles the Obedience of our glorious Surety, an *everlaſting Righteouſneſs* †. Such as was ſubject to no Interruption, nor obſcured by the leaſt Blemiſh; but proceeded always in the ſame uniform Tenour, of the moſt ſpotleſs Perfection.—This Righteouſneſs, in another Senſe, anſwers the Prophet's exalted Deſcription; as it's beneficial and ſovereign Efficacy knows no End; but laſts through all our Life; laſts in the trying Hour of Death; laſts at the deciſive Day of Judgment; laſts through every Generation; and will laſt to all Eternity.

SOMETIMES, I have ſeen that reſplendent Globe *ſtript* of her *Radiance*; or, according to the emphatical Language of Scripture, "turned "into Blood." The Earth, interpoſing with it's

* Rom. v. 17.—x. 3. † Dan. ix. 24.

it's opake Body, intercepted the ſolar Rays, and caſt it's own gloomy Shadow on the Moon. The malignant Influence gained upon her ſickening Orb; extinguiſhed, more and more, the feeble Remainders of Light; till at length, like one in a *deep Swoon*, no Comelineſs was left in her Countenance; ſhe was totally overſpread with Darkneſs.—At this Juncture, what a Multitude of Eyes were gazing upon the rueful Spectacle! Even of thoſe Eyes, which diſregarded the Empreſs of the Night; or beheld her with Indifference; when robed in Glory, and riding in her triumphant Chariot, ſhe ſhed a ſofter Day through the Nations. But now, under theſe Circumſtances of Diſgrace, they watch her Motions with the moſt *prying Attention*. In every Place, her Misfortune is the Object of general Obſervation; and the prevailing Topic of Diſcourſe, in every Company.

Is it not thus, with regard to *Perſons* of *Eminence*, in their reſpective Spheres! Kings, at the Head of their Subjects; Nobles, ſurrounded with their Dependents; and (after Names of ſo much Grandeur, may I be allowed to add?) Miniſters labouring among their People *; are each in a conſpicuous Station. Their Conduct in it's *minuteſt* Step, eſpecially in any *Miſcarriage*, will be

* *Ye are the Light of the World. A City that is ſet on a Hill, cannot be hid.* Matth. v. 14.

be narrowly ſurveyed, and critically ſcanned: Can there be a louder Call, to ponder the Paths of their Feet, and to be particularly jealous over all their Ways?—Thoſe, who move in inferior Life, may groſsly offend; and little Alarm be given; perhaps, no Notice taken. But it is not to be expected, that the leaſt Slip in their Carriage, the leaſt Flaw in their Character, will paſs undiſcovered. *Malice*, with her Eagle-Eyes, will be ſure to diſcern them; while *Cenſure*, with her ſhrill Trumpet, will be as far from concealing them; as *Calumny*, with her treacherous Whiſpers, from extenuating them. A Planet may ſink below the Horizon; or a Star, for ſeveral Months, withdraw it's Shining; and ſcarce one in ten Thouſand perceive the Loſs. But, if the Moon ſuffers a tranſient Eclipſe, almoſt half the World are Spectators of her Diſhonour.

VERY different was the Caſe, when, at this late Hour, I have taken a ſolitary Walk on the *Weſtern Cliffs*. At the Foot of the ſteep Mountain, the Sea, all clear and ſmooth, ſpread itſelf into an immenſe Plain, and held a watry Mirror to the Skies. Infinite Heights above, the Firmament ſtretched it's azure Expanſe; beſpangled with unnumbered Stars, and adorned with the Moon, "walking in Brightneſs *." She ſeemed to contemplate herſelf, with a peculiar Pleaſure; while

* Job xxxi. 26.

while the *tranſparent Surface*, both received, and returned her *ſilver Image*. Here, inſtead of being covered with Sack-cloth, ſhe ſhone with double Luſtre; or rather, with a Luſtre multiplied, in Proportion to the Number of Beholders, and their various Situations.

SUCH, methinks, is the Effect of an exemplary Behaviour, in Perſons of exalted Rank. Their Courſe, as it is nobly diſtinguiſhed, ſo it will be happily *influential*. Others will catch the diffuſive Ray; and be ambitious to reſemble a Pattern, ſo attracting; ſo commanding. Their amiable Qualities, will not terminate in themſelves: but we ſhall ſee them *reflected* from their Families; their Acquaintance; their Retainers. Juſt as we may now behold another Moon; trembling * in the Stream; glittering in the Canal; and diſplaying it's lovely Impreſs, on every Collection of Waters.

THE Moon, Philoſophy ſays, is a ſort of *Sovereign* over the *great Deep*. Her Orb, like a Royal Sceptre, ſways the Ocean, and actuates the fluid Realms. It ſwells the Tides, and perpetuates the reciprocal Returns of Ebb and Flow. By which means, the liquid Element purges off it's Filth; and is preſerved, from being putrefied itſelf, and from poiſoning the World.—Is the

* *Splendet tremulo ſub Lumine Pontus.* VIRG.

Moon thus *operative* on the vaſt Abyſs? And ſhall not the Faith of eternal and infinite Delights to come, be equally efficacious on this Soul of mine?—Far above her argent Fields, are Treaſures of *Happineſs*, unſeen by mortal Eye; by mortal Ear unheard; and unconceived by any human Imagination. In that deſirable World, the moſt diſtinguiſhed and exalted *Honours* alſo are conferred; in Compariſon with which, the Thrones and Diadems of earthly Monarchs, are empty Pageants, and childiſh Toys. —Yonder Arch of Sapphire, with all it's Spangles of Gold, is but the Floor of thoſe Divine Abodes. What then are the Apartments; what is the Palace? How bright with Glories; how rich with Bliſs?

O! ye Manſions of Bleſſedneſs; ye Beauties of my Father's Kingdom; which far outſhine theſe Lamps of the viſible Heaven; tranſmit your ſweet and winning Invitations to my Heart. *Attract* and *refine*, all my Affections. Withdraw them from *ſtagnating*, on the ſordid Shores of Fleſh; never ſuffer them to ſettle, upon the impure Lees of Senſe: but impreſs them with *Emotions* of reſtleſs Deſire, after ſublime and celeſtial Joys.—Joys, that will proceed, ſtill proceed in a copious and everlaſting Flow, when Seas ſhall ceaſe to roll:—Joys, that will charm every Faculty with unimaginable Pleaſure; when the Moon, with her waxing Splendors ſhall chear our Sight no more.

Enough

ENOUGH for the preſent Evening. My Thoughts have been ſufficiently exerciſed, and my Steps begin to be attended with Wearineſs. Let me obey the Admonition of Nature; and give Reſpite to my Meditations, Slumber to my Eyes.—But ſtay.—Shall I retire to the Bed of Sleep, with as little Ceremony, and with as much Inattention, as the Brutes to their ſordid Lair? Are no *Acknowledgments* due to that Divine Being, who is the Support of my Life, and the Length of my Days? Have I no farther Need of his *protecting* Care; no more Occaſion for the Bleſſings of his Goodneſs?—*Lepidus*, perhaps, may laugh at the bended Knee; and have a thouſand Darts of Raillery, ready to diſcharge on the Practice of Devotion. The Wits, I know, are unmercifully ſevere on, what *they* call, the Drudgery of Prayer, and the fantaſtical Rant of Praiſe. Theſe they leave to the illiterate Labourer, and the mean Mechanic; or treat them, with a contemptuous Sneer, as the Parſon's ignoble Trade.

IS it then an Inſtance of *ſuperſtitious* Blindneſs, to diſtinguiſh; or of *whimſical* Zeal, to celebrate; the moſt ſupereminent Excellency and Merit? Is it an *ungraceful* Buſineſs; or does it argue a *groveling* Diſpoſition, to magnify Goodneſs, tranſcendently rich and diffuſive?—What

can be ſo truly becoming a *dependent State*, as to pay our adoring Homage, to the Author of all Perfection; and profeſs our devoted Allegiance, to the ſupreme almighty Governor of the Univerſe? —Can any thing more ſignificantly beſpeak an *ingenuous Temper*; or adminiſter a more real Satisfaction to it's fineſt Feelings; than the Exerciſes of penitential Devotion? By which we give Vent to an honeſt Anguiſh; or melt into filial Sorrow; for our Inſenſibility to the beſt of Friends, for our Diſobedience to the beſt of Parents?—In a Word; can there be a more *ſublime Pleaſure*, than to dwell, in fixed Contemplation, on the Beauties of the Eternal Mind; the amiable Original of all that is fair, grand, and harmonious; the beneficent Giver of all that is convenient, comfortable, and uſeful?—Can there be a more *advantageous Employ*, than to preſent our Requeſts to the Father of Mercies; opening our Minds to the Irradiations of his Wiſdom, and all the Faculties of our Souls to the Communications of his Grace? —It is ſtrange, unaccountably ſtrange, that the Notion of *Dignity* in Sentiment, and the Purſuit of *refined* Enjoyment, ſhould ever be diſunited from Devotion. That Perſons, who make Pretenſions to an improved Taſte, and exalted Genius, ſhould neglect this moſt ennobling Intercourſe, with the wiſeſt and beſt of Beings; the inexhauſtible Source of Honour and Joy.

SHALL I be deterred, from approaching this Source of the pureſt Delight? Deterred, from purſuing this higheſt Improvement of my Nature? Deterred from all, by a *formidable* Banter; or confuted, by one *irrefragable* Smile?—No: let the Moon, in her reſplendent Sphere; and yonder Pole, with all it's ſtarry Train; witneſs, if I be ſilent Even or Morn. If I refrain to kindle in my Heart and breathe from my Lips, the reaſonable Incenſe of Praiſe. Praiſe to that great and glorious GOD, who formed the Earth, and built the Skies; who poured from his Hand the watery World, and ſhed the all-ſurrounding Air abroad.—"Thou alſo madeſt "the Night, Maker Omnipotent! and Thou, "the Day! Which I, though leſs than the leaſt "of all thy Mercies, have paſſed in Safety, "Tranquillity, and Comfort.—When I was "loſt in the Extravagance of Dreams, or lay "immerſed in the Inſenſibility of Sleep; thy "Hand recovered me from the temporary Le-"thargy. Thy Hand ſet a new, a delicately "fine Edge, on all my blunted *Senſes*; and "ſtrung my Sinews with recruited Vigour. "When my Thoughts were benumbed and "ſtupefied, thy quickening Influence rouſed "them into Activity; when they were diſcon-"certed and wild, thy regulating Influence re-"duced them into Order. Refitting me at

" once, to reliſh the innocent Entertainments of " an *animal*, and to enjoy the ſublime Gratifica- " tions of a *rational* Capacity.—When Darkneſs " covered the Creation, at thy Command, the *Sun* " aroſe; painted the Flowers, and diſtinguiſhed " every Object; gave Light to my Feet, and " gave Nature, with all her beautiful Scenes, to " my Eye.—To Thee, O Thou GOD of my " Strength, I owe the *Continuance* of my Be- " ing, and the *Vivacity* of my Conſtitution. By " thy ſacred Order, without any Conſciouſneſs " of mine, the Wheels of Life move, and the " crimſon Fountain plays. *Over-ruled* by thy " exquiſite *Skill*, it transforms itſelf, by the " niceſt Operations of an inexplicable kind of " Chemiſtry, into a Variety of the fineſt Se- " cretions. Which glide into the Muſcles, and " ſwell them for Action; or pour themſelves " into the Fluids, and repair their inceſſant De- " cays. Which cauſe Chearfulneſs to ſparkle in " the Eye, and Health to bloom in the Cheek.

" *DISASTROUS Accidents*, injurious to " the Peace of my Mind; or fatal to the Wel- " fare of my Body; beſet my Paths. But thy " Faithfulneſs and Truth, like an impenetrable " Shield, guarded me all around. Under this " Divine Protection, I walked ſecure, amidſt " Legions of *apparent* Perils; and paſſed un-

" hurt, through a far greater Multiplicity of *un-*
" *seen* Evils. Not one of my Bones was broken;
" not a single Shaft grazed upon my Ease; even
" when the Eye that watched over me, saw, in it's
" wide Survey, *Thousands falling beside me*, in ir-
" recoverable Ruin; *and ten Thousands* deeply
" wounded, *on my Right-hand.*—If Sickness has,
" at any Time, saddened my Chamber, or Pain
" harrowed my Flesh; it was a *wholsome* Disci-
" pline, and a *gracious* Severity. The Chastise-
" ment proved a sovereign Medicine, to cure me
" of an immoderate Fondness, for this imperfect
" troublesome State; and to quicken my Desires,
" after the unimbittered Enjoyments of my eter-
" nal Home.—Has not thy Munificence, unwea-
" ried and unbounded, spread my *Table*; and fur-
" nished it, with the finest Wheat; replenished it,
" with Marrow and Fatness? While Temperance
" sweetened the Bowl; Appetite seasoned the
" Dish; Contentment and Gratitude crowned
" the Repast.—Has not thy Kindness, O GOD
" of the Families of *Israel*, preserved my affec-
" tionate *Relations*; who study, by their ten-
" der Offices, to soften every Care, and heighten
" every Joy? Has not thy Kindness given me va-
" luable *Friends*; whose Presence is a Cordial, to
" chear me in a dejected Hour; and whose Con-
" versation, mingles Improvement with Delight?

" WHEN Sin lay diſguiſed amidſt flowery " Scenes of Pleaſure; enlightened by thy Wiſ- " dom, I *diſcerned* the latent Miſchief; made " reſolute by thy Grace, I *ſhunned* the luſcious " Bane. If, through the Impulſe of Senſuality, " or the Violence of Paſſion, I have been hur- " ried into the Snare, and ſtung by the Ser- " pent; thy faithful Admonitions, have *recalled* " the fooliſh Wanderer; while the Blood of thy " Son, has *healed* his deadly Wounds.—Some, " no Doubt, have been cut off in the Midſt of " their Iniquities; and tranſmitted, from the " Thrillings of polluted Joy, to the Agonies of " eternal Deſpair. Whereas, I have been diſ- " tinguiſhed by long-ſuffering Mercy; and, in- " ſtead of lifting up my Eyes in Torments, to " behold a Heaven irrecoverably loſt; I may " lift them up under the pleaſing Views of being " admitted, ere long, into thoſe Abodes of end- " leſs Felicity.—In the mean Time, Thou haſt " vouchſafed me the *Revelation* of thy Will; " the Influences of thy *Spirit*; and Abundance " of the moſt effectual *Aids*, for advancing in " Knowledge, and growing in Godlineſs: for be- " coming more conformable to thy Image, and " more meet for thy Preſence: for taſting the " Pleaſures of Religion, and ſecuring the Riches " of Eternity.

" How various is thy Beneficence, O Thou " Lover of Souls! It has unſealed a thouſand " Sources of Good; opened a thouſand Avenues " of Delight; and heaped Bleſſings upon me, " with a ceaſeleſs Liberality. If I ſhould at- " tempt to declare them; they would be more " than the *ſtarry* Hoſt, which glitter in this un- " clouded Sky; more than the *dewy* Gems, " which will adorn the Face of the Morning.

" And ſhall I *forget* the GOD of my Salva- " tion, the Author of all my Mercies? Rather " let my Pulſe forget to beat!—Shall I render " Him *no* Expreſſions of Thankfulneſs? Then " might all Nature reproach my Ingratitude.— " Shall I reſt ſatisfied with the *bare* Acknowledg- " ment of my Lips? No: let my Life be vocal, " and ſpeak his Praiſe, in that only genuine, " that moſt emphatical Language—the Lan- " guage of devout Obedience. Let the *Bill* be " drawn upon my very Heart; let all my Af- " fections *acknowledge* the Draught; and let the " whole Tenour of my Actions, in Time and " through Eternity, be continually *paying* the " Debt—the ever-pleaſing, ever-growing Debt " of Duty, Veneration, and Love.

" And can I, O Thou Guide of my Go- " ings, and Guardian of all my Intereſts— " can I *diſtruſt* ſuch ſignal, ſuch experienced " Goodneſs?

" Goodneſs? *Thou haſt been my Helper*, thro' " all the buſy Scenes of Day: *therefore*, *under* " *the Shadow of thy Wings* will I repoſe myſelf, " during the Darkneſs, the Danger, and Death- " like Inactivity of the Night. Whatever De- " filement I have contracted, waſh it thoroughly " away, in redeeming Blood; and let neither " the ſinful Stain, nor the ſinful Inclination, ac- " company me to my Couch!—Then, ſhall " *I lay me down in Peace, and take my Reſt*; " chearfully referring it to thy all-wiſe Deter- " mination, whether I ſhall open my Eyes in " *this* World, or awake in the unknown Re- " gions of *another*."

The END.

CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

STARRY HEAVENS.

There dwells a noble Pathos *in the Skies,*
Which warms our Paſſions, proſelytes our Hearts.
How eloquently ſhines *the glowing Pole!*
With what Authority it gives it's Charge,
Remonſtrating great Truths *in Stile ſublime!*
Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

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N. B. It may ſeem unaccountable to an *unlearned* Reader, that Aſtronomers ſhould ſpeak ſuch amazing Things; and ſpeak them with ſuch an Air of *Aſſurance*; concerning the Diſtances and Magnitudes, the Motions and Relations, of the heavenly Bodies. I would deſire ſuch a Perſon to conſider the Caſe of ECLIPSES, and with what *Exactneſs* they are calculated. They are not

not only foretold, but the very Inſtant of their *Beginning* is determined. The preciſe Time of their *Continuance* is aſſigned; aſſigned, almoſt to the *Nicety* of a Moment; and what is ſtill more ſurpriſing, for the Space of *Hundreds* or *Thouſands* of Years to come.—As this is a Matter of Fact, abſolutely indiſputable; it is alſo a very obvious, yet ſolid Demonſtration, that the Principles of Science, on which thoſe Calculations proceed, are not mere Conjecture, or precarious Suppoſition; but have a *real*, a *certain* Foundation, in the Nature and Conſtitution of Things.

CONTEMPLATIONS

ON THE

STARRY HEAVENS.

THIS Evening, I exchange the nice Retreats of Art, for the noble Theatre of Nature. Inſtead of meaſuring my Steps, under the *Covert* of an Arbour; let me range along the *Summit*, of this gently riſing Hill.—There is no Need of the leafy Shade, ſince the Sun has quitted the Horizon, and withdrawn his ſcorching Beams. But ſee, how Advantages and Inconveniencies are uſually linked, and chequer our Affairs below! If the *annoying Heat* ceaſes, the *Landſcape*, and it's pleaſing Scenes, are alſo removed.—The majeſtic Caſtle, and the lowly Cottage, are vaniſhed together. I have loſt the aſpiring Mountain, and it's ruſſet Brow;

I look round, but to no Purpoſe, for the humble Vale, and it's flowery Lap. The Plains whitened with Flocks, and the Heath yellow with Furze, diſappear. The advancing Night, has wrapt in Darkneſs the long extended Foreſt; and drawn her Mantle, over the Windings of the ſilver Stream. I no longer behold that luxuriant Fertility in the Fields; that wild Magnificence of Proſpect, and endleſs Variety of Images; which have ſo often touched me with Delight, and ſtruck me with Awe, from this commanding Eminence.

THE Loſs, however, is ſcarcely to be regretted; ſince it is amply compenſated, by the opening Beauties of the Sky. Here I enjoy a free View of the whole Hemiſphere; without any Obſtacle from below, to confine the exploring Eye; or any Cloud from above, to overcaſt the ſpacious Concave. 'Tis true; the lively Vermilion, which ſo lately ſtreaked the Chambers of the Weſt, is all faded. But the *Planets*, one after another, light up their Lamps; the *Stars* advance in their glittering Train; a Thouſand and a Thouſand Luminaries, ſhine forth in ſucceſſive Splendors; and the whole Firmament is kindling into the moſt beautiful Glow. The Blueneſs of the Æther, heightened by the Seaſon of the Year, and ſtill more enlivened by the *Abſence* of the *Moon*, gives thoſe Gems of Heaven the ſtrongeſt Luſtre.

ONE

ONE Pleasure more, the invading Gloom has not been able to snatch, from my Sense. The Night rather improves, than destroys, the Fragrance which exhales from the *blooming Beans*. With these, the Sides of this sloping Declivity are lined; and with these, the balmy Zephyrs perfume their Wings. Does *Arabia*, from all her spicy Groves, breathe a more liberal, or a more charming Gale of Sweets? And, what is a peculiar Recommendation of the rural Entertainments, presented in our happy Land, they are alloyed by no Apprehensions of Danger. No poisonous Serpent, lurks under the Blossom; nor any ravenous Beast, lies ready to start from the Thicket.—But, I wander from a far more exalted Subject. My Thoughts, like my Affections, are too easily diverted from the Heavens, and detained by inferior Objects. Away, my Attention, from these little Blandishments of the Earth; since all the *Glories* of the *Sky* invite thy Regard.

WE have taken a Turn among the *Tombs*, and viewed the solemn Memorials of the Dead: in order to learn the Vanity of mortal Things, and to break their soft Inchantment.—We have surveyed the *Ornaments* of the *Garden*; not that the Heart might be planted in the Parterre, or take Root among the flowery Race: but that

these Delicacies of a Day, might teach us to aspire after a better Paradise; where Beauty never fades, and Delight is ever in the Bloom.—A Third Time we lighted the Candle of Meditation; and sought for Wisdom, not in the crouded City, or wrangling Schools, but in the silent and lonely *Walks* of antient *Night* *.—Let us once more indulge the contemplative Vein, and raise our Speculations to those *sublimer Works* of the great Creator; which the Regions of the Sky contain, and this dusky Hour unveils †.

If we have discerned the Touches of his Pencil, glowing in the Colours of Spring; if we have seen a Sample of his Beneficence, exhibited in the Stores of Nature; and a Ray of his Brightness, beaming in the Blaze of Day; what an infinitely richer Field for the Display of his Perfections, are the Heavens! The *Heavens*, in the most emphatical Manner, declare the Glory of God. The Heavens are nobly eloquent of the Deity, and the most magnificent Heralds

* Referring to the several Subjects of the Three preceding Essays.

† Night opes the *noblest Scenes*, and sheds an Awe,
Which gives those venerable Scenes full Weight,
And deep Reception in th' entender'd Heart.
Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

Heralds of their Maker's Praiſe. They ſpeak to the whole Univerſe; for there is neither Speech ſo *barbarous*, but their Language is underſtood; nor Nation ſo *diſtant*, but their Voices are heard among them *.—Let me then, in this ſolemn Seaſon, formed for Thought, and a calm Intercourſe with Heaven; let me liſten to their ſilent Lectures. Perhaps, I may receive ſuch impreſſive Manifeſtations of "the eternal Power and God-"head," as may *ſhed* Religion on my Soul, while I walk the ſolitary Shades; and may be a tutelary *Friend* to my *Virtue*, when the Call of Buſineſs, and the Return of Light, expoſe me again to the Inroads of Temptation.

THE *Iſraelites*, inſtigated by Frenzy rather than Devotion, worſhipped the Hoſt of Heaven. And the Pretenders to *judicial Aſtrology* talk of, I know not what, myſterious Efficacy; in the different Aſpect of the Stars, or the various Conjunction and Oppoſition of the Planets.—Let thoſe, who are unacquainted with the ſure Word of Revelation, give ear to theſe Sons of Deluſion, and Dealers in Deceit. For my Part, it is a Queſtion of Indifference to me, whether the Conſtellations ſhone with Smiles, or loured in Frowns, on the Hour of my Nativity. Let CHRIST be my Guard; and, ſecure in ſuch a Protection, I would laugh at their impotent Menaces. Let

* Pſal. xix. 3.

CHRIST be my *Guide*; and I shall scorn to ask, as well as despair of receiving, any predictory Information from such senseless Masses.—What! shall "the Living seek to the Dead *?" Can these Bodies advertise me of future Events, which are unconscious of their own Existence? Shall I have recourse to dull unintelligent Matter, when I may apply to that all-wise Being; who, with one comprehensive Glance, distinctly views whatever is lodged in the Bosom of Immensity, or forming in the Womb of Futurity?—Never, never will I search for any Intimations of my *Fate*; but often trace my Creator's *Footsteps* †, in yonder starry Plains. In the former Case, they would

* Isa. viii. 19.

† "It is most becoming (says a great Author) "such imperfect Creatures as we are, to contemplate the Works of GOD, with *this* Design that "we may discern the Manifestations of Wisdom "in them; and thereby excite in ourselves those "devout Affections, and that superlative Respect, "which is the very Essence of Praise, as it is a reasonable and moral Service." ABERNETHY *on the Attributes.*—And, indeed, if we are sincerely disposed to employ ourselves in this excellent, this delightful Duty of praising the infinite Creator; the *Means*, and the *Motives*, are both at hand. His Works, in a wonderful and instructive Variety, present themselves; with pregnant Manifestations of the most transcendent Excellencies of their Maker. They pour their Evidence from all Quarters, and into all the Avenues of the Mind. They invite us, especially in the magnificent System of the Universe,

to

would be Teachers of Lyes; in the latter, they are Oracles of Truth. In this therefore, this Senſe only, I profeſs myſelf the Pupil of the Stars.

THE Vulgar, are apprehenſive of nothing more, than a Multitude of *bright Spangles*, dropt over the æthereal Blue. They have no higher Notion of theſe fine Appearances, than that they are ſo many *golden Studs*, with which the Empyrean Arch is decorated.—But ſtudious Minds, that carry a more accurate and ſtrict Inquiry among the celeſtial Bodies, bring back Advices of a moſt aſtoniſhing Import. Let me juſt recollect the moſt material of thoſe *ſtupendous Diſcoveries*; in order to furniſh out proper Subjects for Contemplation. And let the Unlearned remember, That the Scene I am going to diſplay, is the Workmanſhip of that incomprehenſible GOD, who is "perfect in Knowledge, and mighty in "Power." Whoſe Name, whoſe Nature, and all whoſe Operations, are "great and marvel-"lous." Who ſummons into Being, with equal Eaſe, a ſingle Grain, or ten thouſand Worlds.—

To

to contemplate—*Counſel*, conſummately wiſe; and *Execution*, inimitably perfect:—*Power*, to which nothing is impoſſible: and *Goodneſs*, which extendeth to All, which endureth for ever.—To give, not a full Diſplay, but only ſome *ſlight Strictures*, of theſe glorious Truths, is the principal Scope of the following Remarks.

To this if we continually advert, the Aſſertions, though they will certainly excite our *Admiration*, need not tranſcend our Belief.

THE Earth, is in Fact, a round Body; however it may ſeem, in ſome Parts, to be ſunk into Vales, and raiſed into Hills *; in other Parts, to be ſpread into a ſpacious Plain, extending to the Confines of the Heavens, or terminated by the Waters of the Ocean.—We may fanſy, that it has deep Foundations, and reſts upon ſome prodigiouſly ſolid Baſis. But it is *pendent*, in the wide tranſpicuous Æther; without any viſible Cauſe, to uphold it from above, or ſupport it from beneath.—It may ſeem to be ſedentary in it's Attitude, and motionleſs in it's Situation.

* A learned Writer, I think, Dr. *Derham*, has ſomewhere an Obſervation to this Purpoſe—That the loftieſt *Summits* of Hills, and the moſt enormous *Ridges* of Mountains, are no real Objection to the *globular* or round Form of the Earth. Becauſe, however they may render it, to our limited Sight, vaſtly uneven and protuberant; yet, they bear no more Proportion to the *intire* Surface of the terraqueous Ball, than a *Particle* of Duſt, caſually dropt on the Mathematician's Globe, bears to it's whole Circumference. Conſequently, the rotund Figure is no more deſtroyed in the former Caſe, than in the latter.—On the ſame Principle, I have not thought it neceſſary, to take any Notice of the comparatively ſmall Difference, between the *Polar* and *Equatorial* Diameter of the Earth.

Situation. But it is continually *failing* *, thro' the Depths of the Sky; and in the Space of Twelve Months, finiſhes the mighty Voyage. Which periodical Rotation, produces the Seaſons, and compleats the Year.—As it proceeds in the annual Circuit, it *ſpins* upon it's own *Centre*; and turns it's Sides, alternately to the Fountain of Light. By which means, the *Day* dawns in one Hemiſphere; while the Night ſucceeds in the other. Without this Expedient, one Part of it's Regions would, during half the great Revolution, be ſcorched with exceſſive Heat, or languiſh under an unintermitted Glare: while the other, expoſed to the contrary Extremes, would be frozen to Ice, and buried under a long Oppreſſion of diſmal and deſtructive Darkneſs.

I CANNOT forbear taking Notice; that, in this compound Motion of the Earth, the one never *interferes* with the other, but both are perfectly *compatible*. Is it not thus, with the Precepts of Religion, and the needful Affairs of the preſent Life; not excepting even the innocent Gratifications of our Appetites?—Some, I believe, are apt to imagine, that they muſt renounce Society, if they devote themſelves to CHRIST;

* With what amazing *Speed*, this Veſſel (if I may carry on the Alluſion), filled with a Multitude of Nations, and freighted with all their Poſſeſſions, makes her Way through the æthereal Space; ſee Page 148, in Note.

CHRIST; and abandon all the Satisfactions of *this* World, if they once become zealous Candidates for the Felicity of *another*.—But this is a very miſtaken Notion, or elſe a very injurious Repreſentation, of the Doctrine which is according to Godlineſs. It was never intended to drive Men into Deſarts; but to lead them, through the peaceful and pleaſant Paths of Wiſdom, into the bliſsful Regions of Life eternal. It was never intended to ſtrike off the Wheels of Buſineſs, or cut in ſunder the Sinews of Induſtry; but rather, to make Men induſtrious from a Principle of *Conſcience*, not from the Inſtigations of *Avarice*; that ſo, they may promote their immortal Happineſs, even while they provide for their temporal Maintenance. It has no Deſign to extirpate our Paſſions, but only to reſtrain their Irregularities; neither would it extinguiſh the Delights of Senſe, but prevent them from evaporating into Vanity, and ſubſiding into Gall.—A Perſon may be chearful among his Friends, and yet joyful in GOD. He may taſte the Sweets of his earthly Eſtate; and, at the ſame Time, cheriſh his Hopes of a nobler Inheritance in Heaven. The *Trader* may proſecute the Demands of Commerce, without neglecting to negociate the Affairs of his Salvation. The *Warrior* may wear his Sword; may draw, in a juſt Cauſe, that murderous Weapon; yet be a good Soldier of JESUS CHRIST, and obtain

tain the Crown that fadeth not away. The *Parent* may lay up a competent Portion for his Children, and not forfeit his Title to the Treasures, either of Grace or of Glory.—So far is Chriſtianity, from obſtructing any valuable Intereſt, or with-holding any real Pleaſure; that it improves the one, and advances the other. Juſt as the diurnal and annual Motions, are ſo far from *claſhing*, that they intirely *accord*; and inſtead of being deſtructive of each other, by mutually blending their Effects, they give Proportion and Harmony to Time, Fertility and innumerable Benefits to Nature.

To Us, who dwell on it's Surface, the Earth is by far the *moſt extenſive* Orb, that our Eyes can, any-where, behold. It is alſo cloathed with Verdure; diſtinguiſhed by Trees; and adorned with a Variety of beautiful Decorations. Whereas, to a Spectator placed on one of the Planets, it wears an uniform Aſpect; looks all luminous, and *no larger* than a Spot. To Beings, who dwell at ſtill greater Diſtances, it intirely diſappears.—That which we call, alternately, the Morning and the Evening-Star; as in one Part of her Orbit, ſhe rides foremoſt in the Proceſſion of Night; in the other, uſhers in and anticipates the Dawn; is a *planetary World*. Which, with the four others, that ſo wonderfully vary their myſtic Dance, are in themſelves

ſelves dark Bodies, and ſhine only by Reflexion: have Fields, and Seas, and Skies, of their own: are furniſhed with all Accommodations for *animal* Subſiſtence, and are ſuppoſed to be the Abodes of *intellectual* Life. All which, together with this our earthly Habitation, are dependent on that grand Diſpenſer of divine Munificence, the Sun; receive their Light from the Diſtribution of his Rays, and derive their Comforts from his benign Agency.

THE *Sun*, which ſeems to perform it's daily Stages through the Sky, is, in this reſpect *, *fixed* and immoveable. 'Tis the great Axle of Heaven, about which the Globe we inhabit, and other more ſpacious Orbs, wheel their ſtated Courſes.—The Sun, though ſeemingly *ſmaller* than the *Dial* it illuminates, is abundantly *larger* † than this whole *Earth*; on which ſo many lofty Mountains riſe, and ſuch vaſt Oceans roll. A Line, extending from Side to Side, through the Centre of that reſplendent Orb, would meaſure more than eight hundred thou-

* I ſay, *in this reſpect*; that I may not ſeem to forget, or exclude, the Revolution of the Sun round it's own Axis.

† A hundred thouſand Times, according to the *loweſt* Reckoning. Sir ISAAC NEWTON computes the Sun to be 900,000 Times bigger than the Earth. *Religious Philoſopher*, p. 749.

thouſand Miles: a Girdle, formed to go round it's Circumference, would require a Length of Millions: were it's ſolid Contents to be eſtimated, the Account would overwhelm our Underſtanding, and be almoſt beyond the Power of Language to expreſs *.—Are we ſtartled at theſe Reports of Philoſophy? Are we ready to cry out, in a Tranſport of Surprize? How *mighty* is the Being, who kindled ſuch a prodigious Fire; and keeps alive, from Age to Age, ſuch an enormous Maſs of Flame!—Let us attend our philoſophic Guides, and we ſhall be brought acquainted with Speculations, more inlarged and more amazing.

THIS Sun, with all it's attendant Planets, is but a very little Part of the grand Machine of the Univerſe. Every *Star*, though in Appearance, no bigger than the Diamond, that glitters upon a Lady's Ring; is really a *vaſt Globe*, like the Sun in Size, and in Glory; no leſs ſpacious, no leſs luminous, than the radiant Source of our Day. So that every Star is, not barely a World, but

* Dr. DERHAM, after having calculated the Dimenſions of the Planets, adds, "Amazing as theſe "Maſſes are, they are all far outdone by that ſtupendous Globe of Light, the Sun; which as it is "the Fountain of Light and Heat, to all the Planets about it, ſo doth it far ſurpaſs them all in it's "Bulk: It's apparent Diameter being computed at "822,148 *Engliſh* Miles, it's Ambit at 2,582,873 "Miles, and it's ſolid Contents at 290,971,000,000, "000,000." *Aſtro-Theol.* Book I. Chap. II.

but the *Centre* of a magnificent Syſtem; has a Retinue of Worlds, irradiated by it's Beams, and revolving round it's attractive Influence. All which are loſt, to our Sight, in unmeaſurable Wilds of Æther.—That the Stars appear like ſo many diminutive, and ſcarce diſtinguiſhable *Points*, is owing to the immenſe and inconceivable Diſtance. Immenſe and inconceivable indeed it is; ſince a Ball, ſhot from the loaded Cannon, and flying with unabated Rapidity, muſt travel, at this impetuous Race, almoſt ſeven hundred thouſand Years *, before it could reach the *neareſt* of thoſe twinkling Luminaries.

CAN any Thing be more wonderful, than theſe Obſervations? Yes: There are Truths, far more ſtupendous; there are Scenes, far more extenſive. As there is no End of the Almighty Maker's Greatneſs; ſo no Imagination can ſet Limits to his creating Hand.—Could you ſoar beyond the Moon, and paſs through all the planetary Choir: could you wing your Way to the higheſt apparent Star, and take your Stand on one of thoſe loftieſt Pinacles of Heaven: you would, there, ſee *other Skies* expanded; *another Sun*, diſtributing his inexhauſtible Beams by Day: *other Stars*, that gild the Horrors of the alternate Night: and *other* †, perhaps nobler *Syſtems*, eſta-

* See *Religious Philoſopher*, p 819.

† See *Aſtro-Theology*, Book II. Chap. II.——— Where the Author, having aſſigned various Reaſons to

eſtabliſhed; eſtabliſhed, in unknown Profuſion, through the boundleſs Dimenſions of Space.—Nor does the Dominion of the univerſal Sovereign terminate *there*. Even at the End of this vaſt Tour, you would find yourſelf advanced no farther, than the Suburbs of Creation; arrived only at the Frontiers of the great JEHOVAH's Kingdom *.

AND do they tell me; That the Sun, the Moon, and all the Planets, are but a little Part of HIS Works? *How great*, then, *are his Signs!*

to ſupport this Theory of our *modern Aſtronomers*, adds—"Beſides the fore-mentioned ſtrong Probabi-"lities, we have this farther Recommendation of ſuch "an Account of the Univerſe, that it is far *more* mag-"nificent, and worthy of the infinite *Creator*, than "any other of the narrower Schemes."

* *Job*, after a moſt beautiful Diſſertation, on the mighty Works of GOD; as they are diſtributed through univerſal Nature, from the Heights of Heaven, to the very Depths of Hell; cloſes the magnificent Account with this Acknowledgment; *Lo! theſe are Parts of his Ways*. Or, as the original Word more litterally ſignifies; and may, I think, be more elegantly rendered: Theſe are only *the Skirts*, the very outermoſt Borders of his Works. No more than a ſmall Preface to the immenſe Volume of the Creation. —From the *Hebrew* קצות *Extremitates*, I cannot forbear thinking, on the extreme and very attenuated *Fibres* of the Root, when compared with the whole Subſtance of the *Trunk*; or on the exquiſitely ſmall Size of the *capillary* Veſſels, when compared with the whole Structure of the Body. *Job* xxvi. 14.

And how mighty are his Wonders !*—And if ſo, what is the CREATOR Himſelf! How far exalted above all Praiſe! Who is ſo *high*; that He looks down on the higheſt of theſe dazling Spheres, and ſees even the Summit of Creation in a Vale: ſo *great*, that this prodigious Extent of Space, is but a Point in his Preſence; and all this Confluence of Worlds, as the lighteſt Atom, that fluctuates in Air, and ſports in the meridian Ray †. THOU

* Dan. iv. 3.

† This puts me in mind of a very fine Remark on a ſcriptural Beauty; and a ſolid Correction of the common Tranſlation; made by that learned, ſagacious, and devout Expoſitor *Vitringa*—Iſa. xl. 15. We find it witten of the Supreme Being, That *he taketh up the Iſles as a very little Thing*. Which, our Critic obſerves, is neither anſwerable to the Import of the Original, nor conſonant to the Structure of the Diſcourſe. The Prophet had no Intention to inform Mankind, what the Almighty could *do*, with regard to the Iſlands, if he pleaſed to exert uncontroulable Power. His Deſign was to ſhew, how inſignificant, or rather what mere Nothings *they are*, in his Eſteem, and before his Majeſty.—The Iſlands, ſays he, though ſo *ſpacious*, as to afford Room for the Erection of Kingdoms, and the Abode of Nations; though ſo *ſtrong*, as to withſtand for many Thouſands of Years, the raging and reiterated Aſſaults of the whole watry World; are yet, before the adored JEHOVAH, *ſmall* as the minuteſt Grain, which the Eye can ſcarce diſcern; *light* as the feathered Mote, which the leaſt Breath hurries away like a Tempeſt.—אִיִּים כִּדַּק יִטּוֹל *Inſulæ ſunt ut leve quid, quod avolat. The* deep-rooted *Iſlands are as the volatile Atom, which*, by the gentleſt Undulations of the Air, *is wafted to and fro in perpetual Agitation.*

THOU moſt ſublime and incomprehenſibly glorious GOD, how am I overwhelmed with Awe! How ſunk into the loweſt Proſtration of Mind! When I conſider thy "*excellent Greatneſs*," and my own utter Inſignificancy!—And have I, exceſſively mean as I am, have I entertained any *conceited Apprehenſions* of myſelf? Have I felt the leaſt Elatement of Thought, in the Preſence of ſo majeſtic and adorable a Being? How ſhould this wound me with Sorrow, and cover me with Confuſion!—O my GOD, was I poſſeſſed of all the *high Perfections*, which accompliſh and adorn the Angels of Light; amidſt all theſe noble Endowments, I would fall down in the *deepeſt Abaſement* at thy Feet. Loſt in the infinitely ſuperior Blaze of thy uncreated Glories; I would confeſs myſelf, to be nothing; to be leſs than Nothing, and Vanity.—How much more ought I to maintain the moſt unfeigned Humiliation, before thy Divine Majeſty; who am not only Duſt and Aſhes, but a Compound of Ignorance, Imperfection, and Depravity!

WHILE, beholding this vaſt Expanſe, I learn my own extreme Meanneſs; I would alſo diſcover the abject Littleneſs of all *terreſtrial Things*. —What is the Earth, with all her oſtentatious Scenes, compared with this aſtoniſhingly grand Furniture of the Skies? What, but a dim *Speck*,

hardly perceivable in the Map of the Univerſe? It is obſerved, by a very judicious Writer *, That if the Sun himſelf, which enlightens this Part of the Creation, was extinguiſhed; and all the Hoſt of planetary Worlds, which move about him, were annihilated; they would not be miſſed, by an Eye that can take in the whole Compaſs of Nature, any more than a Grain of Sand upon the Sea Shore. The Bulk of which they conſiſt, and the Space which they occupy, is ſo exceedingly little in compariſon of the Whole; that their Loſs would ſcarce leave a Blank, in the Immenſity of GOD's Works.—If then, not our Globe only, but this whole Syſtem, be ſo very diminutive; what is a Kingdom, or a County? What are a few *Lordſhips*, or the ſo much admired *Patrimonies* of thoſe, who are ſtiled Wealthy †? When I meaſure them with my own little Pittance, they ſwell into proud and bloated Dimenſions. But, when I take the Univerſe for my Standard, how ſcanty is their Size, how contemptible their Figure! They ſhrink into *pompous Nothings* ‡.

WHEN the keen-eyed Eagle ſoars above all the feathered Race, and leaves their very Sight below:

* Spect. Vol. VIII. N° 565.

† *Juvat inter ſidera vagantem divitum pavimenta ridere, & totam cum auro ſuo terram.* SEN.

‡ *Terrellæ grandia inania.* WATTS's Hor. Lyr.

below: when she wings her Way, with direct Ascent, up the Steep of Heaven; and steadily gazing on the meridian Sun, accounts it's beaming Splendors all her own: Does she then regard, with any Solicitude, the *Mote* that is flying in the Air, or the *Dust* which she shook from her Feet? And shall this eternal Mind, which is capable of contemplating it's Creator's Glory; which is intended to enjoy the Visions of his Countenance; shall this *eternal Mind*, endued with such great Capacities, and made for such exalted Ends, be so *ignobly ambitious*, as to sigh for the Tinsels of State; or so *poorly covetous*, as to grasp after ample Territories on a Needle's Point?—No: under the Influence of such Considerations, I feel my Sentiments expand, and my Wishes acquire a Turn of Sublimity. My throbbing Desires after worldly Grandeur, die away; and I find myself, if not possessed of Power, yet superior to it's Charms.—Too long, must I own, have my Affections been pinioned by Vanity, and immured in this earthly Clod. But these Thoughts break the *Shackles* *. These Objects open the

Door

* The Soul of Man was made to walk the Skies,
Delightful Outlet of her Prison here!
There, disincumber'd from her Chains, the Ties
Of Toys terrestrial, she can rove at large;

Door of *Liberty*. My Soul, fired by such noble Prospects, weighs Anchor from this little Nook; and coasts no longer about it's contracted Shores; dotes no longer on it's painted Shells. The *Immensity* of Things, is her Range; and an *Infinity* of Bliss, is her Aim.

Behold this immense Expanse, and admire the *Condescension* of thy God.—In this Manner, an inspired and princely Astronomer, improved his Survey of the nocturnal Heavens. *When I consider thy Heavens, even the Works of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which Thou hast ordained*; I am smitten with Wonder at thy Glory, and cry out in a Transport of Gratitude, *LORD, what is Man, that Thou art mindful of him? or the Son of Man, that Thou visiteſt him*?* "How amazing, how charming, is that Divine "Benignity, which is pleased to bow down it's "sacred Regards, to so foolish and worthless a "Creature! Yea, disdains not, from the Height "of infinite Exaltation, to extend it's kind pro-"vidential Care, to our most minute Concerns! "—This is amazing. But that the Everlasting "Sovereign

> There freely can respire, dilate, extend,
> In full Proportion let loose all her Powers.
>
> *Night-Thoughts*, N° IX.

* Psal. viii. 3, 4.

"Sovereign ſhould give his Son, to be made "Fleſh, and become our Saviour! Shall I call it "a *Miracle* of condeſcending Goodneſs? Ra- "ther, What are all Miracles, what are all "Myſteries, to this ineffable Gift!"

HAD the *brighteſt Archangel* been commiſſioned to come down, with the Olive-Branch of Peace in his Hand, ſignifying his Eternal Maker's Readineſs to be reconciled; on our bended Knees, with Tears of Joy, and a Torrent of Thankfulneſs, we ought to have received the tranſporting News. But when, inſtead of ſuch an angelic Envoy, He ſends His *only-begotten Son*; his Son beyond all Thought illuſtrious, to make us the gracious Overture:—ſends Him from the "Habitation of his Holineſs and "Glory," to put on the *Infirmities* of Mortality, and dwell in a Tabernacle of Clay:—ſends Him, not barely to make us a tranſient Viſit, but to abide *many Years* in our inferior and miſerable World:—ſends Him, not to exerciſe Dominion over Monarchs, but to wear out his Life in the ignoble Form of a *Servant*; and, at laſt, to make his Exit under the infamous Character of a *Malefactor!* Was ever Love like this? Did ever Grace ſtoop ſo low*?—Should the

* This reminds me of a very noble Piece of *ſacred Oratory*, where, in a fine Series of the moſt beautiful Gradations, the Apoſtle diſplays the admi-

the Sun be ſhorn of all his radiant Honours, and degraded into a *Clod* of the Valleys; ſhould all the Dignitaries of Heaven be depoſed from their Thrones, and degenerate into *Inſects* of a Day; great, great would be the Abaſement. But *nothing*

rably condeſcending Kindneſs of our Saviour.—*He thought it no Robbery*, it was His indiſputable Right, *to be equal with* the infinite, ſelf-exiſtent, immortal *GOD*. *Yet*, in Mercy to Sinners, *He emptied Himſelf* of the incommunicable Honours, *and* laid aſide the Robes of incomprehenſible Glory.—When He entered upon His mediatorial State, inſtead of acting in the grand Capacity of univerſal Sovereign, He *took upon Him the Form of a Servant*. And not the Form of thoſe miniſtering Spirits, whoſe Duty is Dignity itſelf; who are throned, though adoring.—He took not on him the Nature of Angels, but ſtooped incomparably lower. Aſſumed a Body of animated Duſt, *and was made in the Likeneſs of Men*; thoſe inferior *and* depraved Creatures.—Aſtoniſhing Condeſcenſion! but not ſufficient for the overflowing Richneſs of the Redeemer's Love. *For, being found in Faſhion as a Man, He humbled Himſelf* farther ſtill. Occupied the loweſt Place, where all was low *and* ignoble. He not only ſubmitted to the Yoke of the Law, but alſo bore the Infirmities, and miniſtered to the Neceſſities of Mortals. He even waſhed the Feet of others, and had not where to lay his own Head.—Yea, He carried His meritorious Humiliation, to the very deepeſt Degrees of poſſible Abaſement. He *became obedient unto Death*—And not to a common or natural Death, but a Death more infamous than the Gibbet; more torturous than the Rack;—*even the* accurſed *Death of the Croſs*. Phil. ii. 6, 7, 8.

thing to Thine, moſt bleſſed JESUS; *nothing* to Thine, Thou Prince of Peace; when, for us Men, and for our Salvation, Thou didſt not abhor the coarſe Accommodations of the *Manger*; Thou didſt not decline even the gloomy Horrors of the *Grave*.

'TIS well, the ſacred Oracles have given this Doctrine, the moſt explicit Confirmation, and Evidence quite inconteſtable. Otherwiſe, a Favour ſo undeſerved, ſo unexpected, and rich beyond all Imagination, might ſtagger our Belief. —Could HE, who launches all theſe planetary Globes, through the illimitable Void; and leads them on, from Age to Age, in their extenſive Career; could HE reſign his Hands, to be *confined* by the girding Cord; and his Back to be *plowed*, by the bloody Scourge?—Could HE, who crowns all the Stars with inextinguiſhable *Brightneſs*; be Himſelf defiled with *Spitting*, and diſfigured with the thorny Scar? It is the greateſt of Wonders, and yet the ſureſt of Truths.

O! YE mighty Orbs, that roll along the Spaces of the Sky; I wondered, a little while ago, at your vaſt Dimenſions, and ample Circuits. But now my Amazement ceaſes; or rather, is intirely ſwallowed up by a much more ſtupendous Subject. Methinks, your enormous Bulk is ſhrivelled to an *Atom*; your prodigious Revolutions are contracted to a *Span*; while I

muſe

muſe upon the far more elevated Heights, and unfathomable Depths; the infinitely more extended Lengths, and unlimited Breadths, *of* this *Love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS* *.

CONTEMPLATING this ſtately Expanſe, I ſee a Mirror, which repreſents, in the moſt awful Colours, the *Heinouſneſs* of human *Guilt*. —Ten thouſand Volumes; wrote on purpoſe, to diſplay the Aggravations of my various Acts of Diſobedience; could not ſo effectually convince me of their inconceivable Enormity, as the Conſideration of that *all-glorious Perſon* †; who, to make an Atonement for them, ſpilt the laſt Drop of his Blood.—*I have ſinned*, may every Child of *Adam* ſay; *and what ſhall I do unto Thee, O Thou Obſerver of Men* ‡? Shall I give my Firſt-born for my Tranſgreſſion, the Fruit of my Body for the Sin of my Soul? Vain Commutation! and ſuch as would be rejected by the bleſſed

* Eph. iii. 18, 19.

† *Quo quiſque altius aſcendit in agnitione* CHRISTI, *eo profundius peccati atrocitatem cognoſcet.*

‡ *Job* vii. 20. Not *Preſerver*, as it ſtands in our Verſion, but *Obſerver of Men*. Which Phraſe, as it denotes the exact and inceſſant *Inſpection* of the divine Eye; as it intimates, the abſolute Impoſſibility, that any Tranſgreſſion ſhould *eſcape* the divine Notice; is evidently moſt proper, both to aſſign the *Reaſon*, and heighten the *Emphaſis* of the Context.

bleſſed GOD, with the utmoſt Abhorrence.—Will all the *Potentates*, that ſway the Sceptre in a thouſand Kingdoms, devote their royal and honoured Lives, to reſcue an obnoxious Creature from the Stroke of Vengeance? Alas! it muſt coſt more, incomparably more, to expiate the Malignity of Sin, and ſave a guilty Wretch from Hell.—Will all the *Principalities* of *Heaven* be content to aſſume my Nature, and reſign themſelves to Death for my Pardon*? Even this, would be too mean a Satisfaction, for

* MILTON ſets this Thought, in a very poetical and ſtriking Light.—All the Sanctities of Heaven, ſtand round the Throne of the Supreme Majeſty. GOD foreſees and foretels the Fall of Man; the *Ruin*, which will unavoidably enſue on his Tranſgreſſion; and the utter *Impoſſibility*, of his being able to extricate himſelf, from the Abyſs of Miſery.

He, with his whole Poſterity muſt die;
Die he, or Juſtice muſt; unleſs for Him
Some other able, and as willing pay
The rigid Satisfaction, Death for Death.

After which affecting Repreſentation, intended to raiſe the moſt tender Emotions of Pity; the following Inquiry is addreſſed to all the ſurrounding Angels;

Say, heav'nly Pow'rs, where ſhall we find ſuch Love?
Which of you will be mortal, to redeem
Man's

for inexorable Juſtice; too ſcanty a Reparation, of GOD's injured Honour. So flagrant is human Guilt, that nothing, but a Victim of *infinite Dignity*, could conſtitute an adequate Propitiation.—*He* who ſaid, "Let there be Light, and "there was Light;" Let there be a Firmament, and immediately the blue Curtains floated in the Sky; *He* muſt take Fleſh; HE muſt feel the fierce Torments of Crucifixion; and pour out his Soul in Agonies, if ever ſuch Tranſgreſſors are pardoned.

HOW vaſt is that Debt; which all the Wealth of both the *Indies* cannot diſcharge! How [illegible] vitiated

Man's mortal Crime? and die, the Dead to ſave?
He aſk'd; but all the heav'nly Choir ſtood mute,
And Silence was in Heav'n.—

There is, to me at leaſt, an inimitable Spirit and Beauty in the laſt Circumſtance.—That ſuch an innumerable Multitude, of generous and compaſſionate Beings, ſhould be ſtruck *dumb* with Surprize and Terror, at the very Mention of *The deadly Forfeiture and Ranſom ſet!* No *Language* is ſo eloquent as this *Silence*. Words could not poſſibly have expreſſed, in ſo emphatical a Manner, the *dreadful Nature* of the Taſk; the *abſolute Inability* of any or all Creatures to execute it; the ſuper-eminent and *matchleſs Love* of the Eternal Son, in undertaking the tremendous Work; not only without Reluctance, but unſought and unimplored; with Readineſs, Alacrity, and Delight. *Paradiſe Loſt*, Book III. Line 209. Edit. BENTL.

vitiated that Habit of Body; which all the Drugs produced by Nature herſelf, cannot rectify! But how much more *ruined* was thy Condition, O my Soul! how much more *heinous* were thy Crimes! Since nothing leſs than the Sufferings and Death of Meſſiah, the Son of GOD, and radiant Image of his Glory, could effect thy Recovery, or cancel thy Iniquity.—Though perhaps, thou art not ſunk ſo very deep in Pollution, as ſome of the moſt abandoned Profligates; yet remember the ineſtimable Ranſom, paid to redeem thee from everlaſting Deſtruction. Remember this; and "never open thy Mouth any "more *," either to *murmur* at the Divine Chaſtiſements, or to *glory* in thy own Attainments. Remember this; and even "*loath* thy-"ſelf † for the Multitude of thy Provocations," and thy great Baſeneſs.

ONCE more: Let me view this beautiful, this magnificent Expanſe; and conceive ſome juſter Apprehenſions, of the unknown Richneſs of my *Saviour's Atonement*.—I am informed by a Writer, who cannot miſtake, that the High-Prieſt of my Profeſſion, who was alſo the Sacrifice for my Sins, is *higher than the Heavens* ‡; more exalted in Dignity, more bright with Glory, than

* Ezek. xvi. 63. † Ezek. xxxvi. 31.
‡ Heb. vii. 26.

than all the heavenly Manſions, and all their illuſtrious Inhabitants. If my Heart was humbled, at the Conſideration of it's exceſſive Guilt; how do all my drooping Powers revive, at this delightful Thought? The poor Criminal, that ſeemed to be *tottering* on the very Brink of the infernal Pit; is *raiſed*, by ſuch a Belief, even to the Portals of Paradiſe. My Self-abaſement, I truſt, will always continue; but my Fears, under the Influence of ſuch a Conviction, are quite gone *. I do not, I cannot, doubt the Efficacy

* I am ſorry to find, that ſome of my Readers were a little diſguſted at this Expreſſion, "*My Fears* "*are quite gone.*" As thinking, it diſcovered a Tincture of Arrogance in the Writer, and tended to diſcourage the weak Chriſtian. But, I hope, a more mature Conſideration will acquit me, from *both* theſe Charges.—For, what has the Author ſaid? Only, that at ſome *peculiarly happy* Moments, when the Holy Ghoſt bears Witneſs of CHRIST in his Heart, and He is favoured with a Glimpſe of the Redeemer's matchleſs Excellency—that, in theſe *brighter Intervals* of Life, his trembling Fears, with regard to the deciſive Sentence of the great Tribunal, are turned into pleaſing Expectations. And what is there in ſuch a Declaration, offenſive to the *ſtricteſt* Modeſty, or diſpiriting to the *weakeſt* Believer? Inſtead of creating Diſcouragement, it points out the Way to obtain a ſettled Tranquillity. It's natural Tendency is, to engage the ſerious Mind in a more conſtant and attentive Meditation, on the unknown Merits of the Divine MEDIATOR. And were we

Efficacy of this Propitiation. *While I see a* Glimpse of it's matchleſs Excellency; and *verily believe* myſelf, intereſted in it's Merits; I know not what it is, to feel any miſgiving Suſpicions; but am ſtedfaſt in Faith, and joyful through Hope.

BE my Iniquities like Debts of Millions of Talents, here is more than full Payment for all that prodigious Sum. Let the Enemy of Mankind, and Accuſer of the Brethren, load me with Invectives; this one Plea, *A Divine Redeemer died*, moſt thoroughly quaſhes every Indictment. For, though there be much Turpitude, and manifold Tranſgreſſions, "there is no Condemnation to "thoſe that are in CHRIST JESUS."—Nay, were I chargeable with all the vileſt Deeds, which have been committed in every Age of the World, by every Nation of Men; even in this moſt deplorable Caſe, I need not ſink into Deſpair. Even ſuch Guilt, though grievous beyond all Expreſſion, is not to be compared with that *Abundance* of *Grace* and Righteouſneſs, which dwell in the incarnate Divinity.—How great, how tranſcendently glorious, are the *Perfections* of

we more *thoroughly* acquainted, more *deeply* affected, with his unutterable Dignity; I am perſuaded, our uneaſy Apprehenſions would *proportionably* vaniſh; our Faith be eſtabliſhed, our Hopes brightened, and our Joys inlarged.

of the adored JEHOVAH! So great, so superlatively precious, is the *Expiation* of the dying JESUS. 'Tis impossible for the human Mind, to *exalt* this Atonement *, too highly; 'tis impossible for the HUMBLE PENITENT, to *confide* in it, too steadily. The Scriptures, the Scriptures of eternal Truth, have said it (exult, my Soul, in the Belief of it!), that the Blood on which we rely, is GOD's *own Blood* †; and therefore all-sufficient to expiate, omnipotent to save.

DAVID, that egregious Sinner, but more exemplary Saint, seems to have been well acquainted with this comfortable Truth. What else can be the Import of that very remarkable, but

* This Doctrine, tho' rich with *Consolation* to the ruined Sinner; yet, is it not likely to open a Door for *Licentiousness*; and embolden Transgressors to prosecute their VICES?—No: It is the most powerful Motive to that genuine Repentance, which *flows* from an unfeigned Love of GOD; and *operates* in a hearty Detestation of all Sin. One, who knew the unmeasurable Goodness of the LORD, and was no Stranger to the sinful Perverseness of our Nature, says, *There is Mercy with Thee:* THEREFORE *shalt thou be feared.* Psal. cxxx. 4.—Words, full to my Purpose; which at once add the *highest* Authority to this Sentiment, and direct our Minds to it's proper Influence, and due Improvement.

† Acts xx. 28.

but moſt devout Declaration? *Thou ſhalt purge me* * *with Hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean: thou ſhalt waſh me, and I ſhall be whiter than Snow.*—" I " have been guilty, I muſt confeſs, of the moſt " complicated and ſhocking Crimes: Crimes, " inflamed by every aggravating Circumſtance, " with regard to Myſelf, my Neighbour, and " my GOD. *Myſelf*, who have been bleſſed " above Men, and the diſtinguiſhed Favourite " of Providence; *my Neighbour*, who, in the " moſt dear and tender Intereſts, has been irre- " parably injured; *my GOD*, who might juſtly " expect the moſt grateful Returns of Duty, in- " ſtead of ſuch enormous Violations of his Law. " Yet, all horrid and execrable as *my Offence* " is, it is nothing to the ſuperabundant Merit " of that *great Redeemer*, who was promiſed " from the Foundations of the World; in " whom all my Fathers truſted; who is the " Hope of all the Ends of the Earth. Though " my Conſcience be more loathſome, with adul- " terous Impurity, than the *Dunghil*; though

 " Treachery

* *Pſal.* li. 7. *Thou ſhalt purge.* I prefer this Tranſlation, before the new one. Becauſe this ſpeaks the Language of a more ſtedfaſt Belief, and gives the higheſt Honour to the Divine Goodneſs. Were the Words intended to bear no more, than the common *petitionary* Senſe; and not to be expreſſive of a noble *Plerophory* of Faith; they would rather have been חטאני and כבסני *Imperatives*, not *Futures*.

" Treachery and Murder have rendered it even " black as the Gloom of *Hell*; yet, washed in " the 'Fountain opened for Sin and for Un- " cleanness *,' I shall be — I say not, pure " only, this were a Disparagement to the Efficacy " of my Saviour's Death; but I shall be fair " as the *Lily*, and white as the *Snow*. Nay, " let me not derogate from the glorious Object " of my Confidence; cleansed by this sovereign " sanctifying Stream, I shall be *fairer* than the " full-blown Lily, *whiter* than the new-fallen " Snows."

POWER, saith the Scripture, *belongeth unto GOD* †.—And in what majestic Lines, is this Attribute of JEHOVAH written, throughout the whole Volume of the Creation? Especially, through those magnificent Pages, unfolded in yonder starry Regions. Which are therefore stiled, by the sweet and seraphic Singer of *Israel*, " The " Firmament of his Power ‡." Because, the grand *Exploits* of *Omnipotence* are there displayed, with the utmost Pomp; and recorded, in the most legible Characters.

WHO, that looks upward to the midnight Sky; and, with an Eye of Reason, beholds it's rolling Wonders; who can forbear inquiring, of *what* were those mighty Orbs *formed?*—Amazing to

* Zech. xiii. 1. † Psal. lxii. 11. ‡ Psal. cl. 1.

to relate! They were produced without Materials. They ſprung from Emptineſs itſelf. The ſtately Fabric of univerſal Nature emerged out of *Nothing*. — What *Inſtruments* were uſed by the Supreme Architect, to faſhion the Parts with ſuch exquiſite Niceneſs, and give ſo beautiful a Poliſh to the whole? How was all connected into one finely-proportioned, and nobly finiſhed Structure?—A *bare Fiat* accompliſhed all. LET THEM BE, ſaid GOD. He added no more; and immediately the marvellous Edifice aroſe; adorned with every Beauty; diſplaying innumerable Perfections; and declaring, amidſt enraptur'd Seraphs, it's great Creator's Praiſe. "By the *Word* of "the LORD were the Heavens made, and all the "Hoſt of them by the *Breath* of his Mouth *." —What forceful Machinery *fixed* ſome of thoſe ponderous

* If this Thought is admitted a Second Time, and ſuffered to ennoble the next Paragraph; it is partly, becauſe of it's unequalled *Sublimity*; partly, becauſe it awakens the moſt *grand* Idea of creating Power; and partly, becauſe the Practice of the *Pſalmiſt*, an Authority too great to be controverted, is my Precedent.—The beautiful Stanza quoted from *Pſal.* xxxiii. 6. is a Proof, how thoroughly the Royal Poet entered into the Majeſty of the *Moſaic* Narration. The Repetition of the Sentiment, *ver.* 9. intimates, how peculiarly he was charmed, with that *noble Manner*, of deſcribing the Divine Operations. While the Turn of his own Compoſition ſhews, how perfectly

ponderous Globes, on an immoveable Baſis? What irreſiſtible Impulſe *bowled* others, through the Circuit of the Heavens? What coercive Energy *confined* their impetuous Courſes, within Limits aſtoniſhingly large, yet moſt minutely true?—Nothing but his *ſovereign Will*. For all Things were at firſt conſtituted, and all to this Day abide, "according to his Ordinance."

WITHOUT any toilſome Aſſiduity or laborious Proceſs, to raiſe—to touch—to *ſpeak* ſuch a Multitude of immenſe Bodies into Being—to *launch* them through the Spaces of the Sky, as an Arrow from the Hand of a Giant—to impreſs on ſuch *unwieldy* Maſſes a Motion, far outſtripping the Swiftneſs of the winged Creation *

—and

he poſſeſſed the ſame *elevated Way* of thinking. And this, long before *Longinus* wrote the celebrated Treatiſe, which has taught the Heathen, as well as the Chriſtian World to admire the *Dignity* of the *Jewiſh* Legiſlator's Stile. *Vid.* LONGIN. *de Sublim.* Sect. IX.

* To give *one* Inſtance of this Remark.—The Earth, in the diurnal Revolution, which it performs on it's own Axis, *whirls about* at the Rate of above a Thouſand Miles an Hour. And as the great Orbit, which it deſcribes annually round the Sun, is reckoned at 540 Millions of Miles, it muſt *travel* near a Million and Half, each Day.—What a *Force* muſt be requiſite, to protrude ſo vaſt a Globe: and wheel it on, loaded as it is with huge Mountains, and ponderous Rocks, at ſuch a prodigious Degree of Rapidity! It ſurpaſſes human Conception!

—How

—and to *continue* them in the ſame rapid Whirl, for Thouſands and Thouſands of Years—What an amazing Inſtance of infinite Might is this!—Can any thing be impoſſible to the LORD, the LORD GOD; the Creator and Controuler, of all the Ends of the Earth, all the Regions of the Univerſe? Rather, is not all that we count *difficult*, perfect Eaſe to that glorious Being, who only ſpake, and the World was made *? Who only gave Command, and the ſtupendous Axle was lodged faſt, the lofty Wheels moved complete?—What a ſure Defence, O my Soul, is this everlaſting Strength of thy GOD! Be this thy continual *Refuge*, in the Article of Danger; this thy never-failing *Reſource*, in every Time of Need.

WHAT cannot this uncontroulable Power, of the great JEHOVAH, effect for his People? Be their Miſeries ever ſo galling, cannot this GOD relieve them? Be their Wants ever ſo numerous, cannot this GOD ſupply them? Be their Corruptions within, ever ſo inveterate; or their Temptations without, ever ſo importunate; cannot this mighty, mighty GOD ſubdue the former,

—How natural, how pertinent, how almoſt neceſſary, after ſuch an Obſervation, is the Acknowledgement made by holy *Job! I know that* THOU *canſt do every thing, and that no Thought*, no imaginable Scheme, *can be withholden from thee*, can lie beyond thy Power to execute. Chap. xlii. 2.

* Pſal. xxxii. 9.

and fortify them againſt the latter?—Should *Trials*, with an inceſſant Vehemence, ſift thee as Wheat; ſhould *Tribulation*, with a Weight of Woes, almoſt grind thee to Powder; ſhould *Pleaſure*, with her bewitching Smiles, ſolicit thee to delicious Ruin; yet "hold thee faſt by GOD," and lay thy Help upon Him, that is omnipotent *. Thou canſt not be involved in ſuch calamitous Cir-

* It is a moſt charming Deſcription, as well as a moſt comfortable Promiſe, which we find in *Iſa.* xl. 29, 30, 31.—*HE giveth Power to the Feeble; and to them that have no Might* at all, *He* not only impart-eth, but *increaſeth Strength*; making it to abound, where it did not ſo much as exiſt.—Without this Aid of JEHOVAH, *even the Youths*, amidſt the very Prime of their Vigour and Activity, *ſhall become languid* in their Work, *and weary* in their Courſe. *And the young Men*, to whoſe Reſolution and Abilities nothing ſeemed impracticable, *ſhall* not only not ſucceed, but *utterly fall*, and miſcarry in their various Enterprizes. —*Whereas, they that wait upon the LORD*, and confide in his Grace, ſhall preſs on, with a generous Ardor, from one Degree of religious Improvement to another. Inſtead of exhauſting, they *ſhall renew their Strength*; Difficulties ſhall animate, and Toil invigorate them. *They ſhall mount up*, as *with* ſoaring *Wings*, above all Oppoſition; they ſhall be carried through every Diſcouragement, *as Eagles* cleave the yielding Air. *They ſhall run*, with Speed and Alacrity, the Way of GOD's Commandments, *and not be weary: They ſhall hold on*, (ילכו *progredientur, carpent iter*) with Conſtancy and Perſeverance, in thoſe peaceful Paths, *and not faint*; but arrive at the End of their Progreſs, and receive the Prize of their High Calling.

To

Circumſtances, or expoſed to ſuch imminent Peril; but thy GOD, whom thou ſerveſt, is able to deliver thee from the one, and to ſupport thee under the other.—To *ſupport!* to *deliver!* Let me not diſhonour the unlimited Greatneſs of his Power. He is able to exalt Thee, from the deepeſt Diſtreſs, to the moſt triumphant Joy; and to make even a Complication of Evils, work together for thy everlaſting Good. *He is able*, not only to accompliſh what I have been ſpeak-

 ing,

To this moſt chearing Doctrine, permit me to add it's no leſs beautiful and delightful *Contraſt*. *Eliphaz*, ſpeaking of the Enemies of the Righteous, ſays—לא נכחד קימנו—which is rendered by a great Critic in ſacred Learning, *Nihil exciſum factio nobis adverſaria*.—We ſhould reckon, our Language acquitted itſelf tolerably well, if, when depreciating the Abilities of an Adverſary, it ſhould repreſent them weak as the *ſcorched Thread*, feeble as the *diſſolving Smoke*. But theſe are cold Forms of Speech, compared with the Eloquence of the Eaſt. According to the Genius of our Bible, *All the Power that oppoſes the Godly, is* a mere Nothing; or, to ſpeak with a more emphatical Air of Contempt, *a deſtroyed, an extripated Nothing*.—Admire this Expreſſion, ye that are charmed with daring Images, and (what *Tully* calls *verbum ardens*) a ſpirited and glowing Diction.—Remember this Declaration, ye that fight the good Fight of Faith. The united Force of all your Enemies, be it ever ſo formidable to the Eye of Fleſh, is, before your Almighty Guardian, *Nihil nihiliſſimum*, not only Nothing, but *leſs than nothing*, and Vanity. *Job* xxii. 20.

ing, but *to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can aſk, or think* *.

O! THE *wretched Condition* of the Wicked, who have this LORD of all Power for their Enemy! O! the *deſperate Madneſs* of the Ungodly, who provoke the Almighty to Jealouſy!—Beſotted Creatures! are you able to contend with your Maker, and enter the Liſts againſt incenſed Omnipotence? Can you *bear* the Fierceneſs of his Wrath, or ſuſtain the Vengeance of his lifted Arm? At his Preſence, though awfully ſerene, the Hills melt like Wax, and the "Mountains "ſkip like frighted Lambs." At the leaſt Intimation

* I ſhould, in this Place, avoid ſwelling the Notes any farther, was it not to take Notice of the inimitable Paſſage quoted above, and to be found *Eph.* iii. 20.—which, if I do not greatly miſtake, is the moſt complete Repreſentation of Divine Power, that it is poſſible for Words to frame.—To do all that our Tongue can *aſk*, is a Miracle of Might. But we often think more than we can expreſs, and are actuated with "*Groanings unutterable*." Yet, to anſwer theſe vaſt Deſires, is not beyond the Accompliſhment of our heavenly Father.—Nay, to make his Gifts and his Bleſſings commenſurate to the *largeſt Stretch* of human Expectations, is a ſmall Thing with the GOD of Glory. He is able to do *above all*, that the moſt inlarged Apprehenſion can imagine; yea, to do *abundantly* more, *exceeding abundantly* more, than the Mind itſelf, in the utmoſt Exertion of all it's Faculties, is capable of *wiſhing*, or knows how to *conceive*.

timation of his Diſpleaſure, the Foundations of Nature rock, and the "Pillars of Heaven "tremble." How then can a withered Leaf endure, when "his Lips are full of Indignation, "and his Tongue as a devouring Fire?"—Or can any thing *ſcreen* a guilty Worm, when the great and terrible GOD ſhall *whet his glittering Sword, and his Hand take Hold on* inexorable *Judgment?* When *that Hand*, which ſhoots the Planets, Maſſes of exceſſive Bulk *, with ſuch ſurpriſing Rapidity, through the Sky: *that Hand*, which darts the Comets to ſuch unmeaſurable Diſtances, beyond the Orbit of our remoteſt Planet, beyond the Purſuit of the ſtrongeſt Eye: when THAT HAND is ſtretched out to puniſh, can the Munition of Rocks, the Intervention of Seas, or even interpoſing Worlds, divert the Blow?—Conſider this, *Ambition*; and bow thy haughty Creſt. Conſider this, *Diſobedience*; and bend thy iron Sinew. O! conſider this, all ye that forget, or affront, the tremendous JEHOVAH.

* One of the Planets (*Saturn*) is ſuppoſed to be more than 90 times as big, as the Globe on which we live. According to the ſame Calculation, the largeſt of the Planets (*Jupiter*) is above 200 times vaſter, than this vaſt Collection of ſpacious Foreſts, towering Mountains, extenſive Continents, and boundleſs Oceans. — Such enormous Magnitude! winged with ſuch prodigious Speed!—It raiſes Aſtoniſhment beyond Expreſſion—*With GOD is terrible Majeſty!* Job xxxvii. 22.—*Who ſhall not fear* THEE, O LORD, *and glorify thy Name?* Rev. xv. 4.

JEHOVAH. He can, by a single Act of his Will, lay the Universe in utter Ruin: and can He want Power to bring *you*, in a Moment, in the Twinkling of an Eye, to the Dust of Death, or to the Flames of Hell? He has—I say not, Ten thousand Lightnings to scorch you to Ashes; Ten thousand Thunders to crush you into Atoms; but, what is unspeakably more dreadful—He has an *Army* of Terrors, even in the *Look* of his angry Countenance. His very Frown is worse than Destruction.

I CANNOT dismiss this Subject, without admiring the *Patience* of the blessed GOD. Who, though so strong and powerful, yet "is provoked "every Day."—Surely, as is his Majesty, so is his Mercy; his Pity altogether commensurate to his Power. If I vilify but the Name of an earthly Monarch; I lose my Liberty, and am confined to the Dungeon. If I appear in Arms, and draw the Sword, against my national Sovereign; my Life is forfeited, and my very Blood will scarce atone for the Crime. But Thee I have dishonoured, O! thou King immortal and invisible! Against Thee my Breast has fomented *secret Disaffection*; my Behaviour has risen up in *open Rebellion*; and yet I am spared, yet I am preserved. Instead of being banished from thy Presence; I sit at thy Table, and am fed from thy Hand. Instead of pursuing me with *Thunderbolts* of Vengeance, thy *Favours* surround me on every

every Side. That Arm, that injured Arm, which might juſtly fall, with irretrievable Ruin, on a Traitor's Head; is moſt graciouſly ſtretched out, to careſs him, with the tendereſt Endearments; to cheriſh him, with every Inſtance of parental Kindneſs!—O! thou mightieſt, thou beſt of Beings, how am I pained at my very Soul, for ſuch ſhameful and odious Diſingenuity! Let me always abominate myſelf, as the baſeſt of Creatures; but *adore* that unwearied Long-ſuffering of thine, which refuſes to be irritated; *love* that unremitted Goodneſs, which no Acts of Ingratitude could ſtop, or ſo much as check, in it's gracious Current. O! let this ſtubborn Heart; which Duty could not bind; which Threatenings could not awe; be the Captive, the *willing Captive*, of ſuch triumphant Beneficence.

I HAVE often been ſtruck with Wonder at that Almighty Skill, which *weighed* the Mountains in Scales, and the Hills in a Balance; which *proportioned* the Waters in the Hollow of it's Hand, and *adjuſted* the Duſt of the Earth * by

* *Iſa.* xl. 12. *The Duſt of the Earth*, in this ſublime Scripture, ſignifies the dry Land, or *ſolid* Part of our Globe. Which is placed in Contradiſtinction to the whole Collection of *fluid* Matter, mentioned in the preceding Clauſe.—Perhaps, this remarkable Expreſſion may be intended to intimate, not only the extreme

by a Meaſure. But how much more marvellous is that magnificent Oeconomy, which *poiſed* the Stars with inexpreſſible Nicety, and *meted* out the Heavens with a Span! Where all is prodigiouſly vaſt; immenſely various; and yet more than mathematically exact. Surely, the *Wiſdom* of GOD manifeſts itſelf in the Skies, and ſhines, in thoſe lucid Orbs. Shines on the contemplative Mind, with a Luſtre incomparably brighter, than that which their united Splendors tranſmit to the Eye.

BEHOLD yonder countleſs Multitude of Globes; conſider their amazing Magnitude; regard them as the Sovereigns of ſo many Syſtems, each

extreme Niceneſs, which ſtated the Dimenſions of the World *in general*, or in the groſs; but alſo that *particular Exactneſs*, with which the very ſmalleſt Materials, that conſtitute it's Frame (not excepting each individual Atom) were calculated and diſpoſed. — *q. d.* 'Tis a ſmall Thing to ſay, No ſuch enormous Redundancies, as unneceſſary Ridges of Mountains, were ſuffered to ſubſiſt. There was not ſo much as the leaſt Grain of Sand *ſuperfluous*, or a ſingle Particle of Duſt *deficient*.—As the grand Aim of the Deſcription is, to celebrate the *conſummate Wiſdom*, exemplified in the Creation; and to diſplay that *perfect Proportion*, with which every Part tallies, coincides, and harmonizes, with the Whole; I have taken Leave to alter the Word of our *Engliſh* Tranſlation *comprehend*, and introduce in it's ſtead a Term, equally faithful to the *Hebrew*, and more ſignificative of the Prophet's preciſe Idea.

each accompanied with his planetary Equipage. Upon this Suppoſition, what a Multiplicity of mighty Spheres, muſt be perpetually running their Rounds, in the upper Regions! Yet, none miſtake their Way, or *wander* from the Goal; though thy paſs through trackleſs and unbounded Fields. None *fly off* from their Orbits, into extravagant Excurſions; none *preſs in* upon their Centre, with too near an Approach. None *interfere* with each other in their perennial Paſſage; or *intercept* the kindly Communications of another's Influence *. But all their Rotations proceed in eternal Harmony; keeping ſuch Time, and obſerving ſuch Laws, as are moſt exquiſitely adapted to the Perfection of the Whole.

WHILE I contemplate this "excellent Wiſ-"dom, which made the Heavens," and attunes all their Motions; how am I abaſhed at that Mixture of Arrogance and Folly, which has, at any time, inclined me to murmur at thy *Diſpenſations*, O LORD! What is this, but a ſort of implicit Treaſon againſt thy Supremacy; and a tacit Denial of thy infinite Underſtanding? — Haſt

* The Interception of Light, by means of an Eclipſe, happens very *rarely*. And then is of ſo *ſhort* a Continuance, as not to be at all inconvenient. Nay, it is attended with ſuch *Circumſtances*, as render it rather uſeful, than prejudicial.

Haſt Thou ſo, regularly placed ſuch a wonderful Diverſity of Syſtems, through the Spaces of the Univerſe?—Didſt Thou, without any probationary Eſſays, without any improving Retouches, ſpeak them into the moſt conſummate Perfection?—Doſt Thou continually ſuperintend all their Circumſtances, with a Sagacity that never miſtakes the minuteſt Tittle of Propriety? And ſhall I be ſo unaccountably ſtupid, as to queſtion the *Juſtneſs* of thy *Diſcernment*, in "chooſing "my Inheritance, and fixing the Bounds of my "Habitation!"—Not a ſingle Erratum, in modelling the Structure; determining the Diſtance *; and conducting the Career of *unnumbered* Worlds! And ſhall my peeviſh Humour preſume to cenſure thy Interpoſition, with regard to the Affairs of *one* inconſiderable Creature; whoſe Stature, in ſuch

* The Sun in particular (and let this ſerve as a Specimen of that moſt curious Exactneſs, with which the other celeſtial Bodies are conſtituted, and all their Circumſtances regulated) the Sun is formed of ſuch a determinate Magnitude, and placed at ſuch a convenient Diſtance—"as not to annoy, but only "refreſh us, and nouriſh the Ground with it's "kindly Warmth. If it was *larger*, it would ſet "the Earth on Fire; if *ſmaller*, it would leave it "frozen. If it was *nearer* us, we ſhould be ſcorched "to Death; if *farther* from us, we ſhould not be "able to live for want of Heat."

STACKHOUSE's *Hiſtory of the Bible.*

such a comparative View, is less than a Span; and his present Duration, little more than a Moment?

O! THOU GOD, "in whose Hand my "Breath is, and whose are all my Ways," let such Sentiments as now possess my Thoughts, be always lively on my Heart! These shall compose my Mind into a *chearful* Acquiescence, and a *thankful* Submission; even when Afflictions gall the Sense, or Disappointments break my Schemes. Then shall I, like the grateful Patriarch *, in all the Changes of my Condition, and even in the Depths of Distress, erect an *Altar* of adoring Resignation; and inscribe it with the Apostle's *Motto*, To GOD ONLY WISE. Then, shouldst Thou give me Leave to be the Carver of my own Fortunes, I would humbly desire to relinquish the Grant, and recommit the Disposal of myself to thy unerring Beneficence. Fully persuaded, that *thy Counsels*; though contrary to my froward Inclinations, or even afflictive to my Flesh; are incomparably more eligible, than the blind Impulse of my own Will, however soothing to animal Nature.

ON a careless Inspection, you perceive no Accuracy or Uniformity in the Position of the

6 heavenly

* See *Gen.* xii. 7, 8.

heavenly Bodies. They appear like an *illuſtrious Chaos*; a promiſcuous Heap of ſhining Globes; neither ranked in Order, nor moving by Line. —But, what *ſeems* Confuſion, *is* all Regularity. What carries a Show of Negligence, is really the Reſult of the moſt maſterly Contrivance. You think, perhaps, they rove in their aereal Flight; but they rove by the niceſt Rule, and without the leaſt Error. Their Circuits, though ſeemingly devious; their Mazes, though intricate to our Apprehenſions *; are marked out, not indeed with golden Compaſſes, but by the infinitely more exact Determinations of the all-wiſe Spirit.

So, what wears the *Appearance* of Calamity, in the Allotments appointed for the Godly, has really the *Nature* of a Bleſſing. It iſſues from fatherly Love, and will terminate in the richeſt Good. If *Joſeph* is ſnatched from the Embraces of an indulgent Parent, and abandoned to Slavery in a foreign Land; it is in order to ſave the holy Family, from periſhing by Famine; and to preſerve "the Seed, in whom all the Nations "of the Earth ſhould be bleſſed." If he falls into the deepeſt Diſgrace, it is on Purpoſe that he

* — — Mazes intricate,
Eccentric, intervolv'd; yet regular
Then moſt, when moſt irregular they ſeem.
MILT.

he may rise to the highest Honours. Even the Confinement of the Prison, by the unsearchable Workings of Providence, opens his Way to the Right-hand of the Throne itself.—Let the most afflicted Servant of JESUS, wait the final Upshot of Things. He will *then* discover the apparent Expediency of all those Tribulations; which *now*, perhaps, he can hardly admit, without Reluctance; or suffer, without some Struggles of Dissatisfaction. Then, the gushing Tear, and the heaving Sigh, will be turned into Tides of Gratitude, and Hymns of holy Wonder.

IN the mean time, let no audacious Railer, presumptuously impeach the Divine Procedure; but, adoring where we cannot comprehend, let us expect the *Evolution* of the mysterious Plan. Then, shall every Eye perceive; that the seeming Labyrinths of Providence, were the most *direct* and *compendious* Way; to effect his general Purposes of Grace, and to bring about each One's particular Happiness *.—Then, also, shall it be clearly shewn, in the Presence of applauding Worlds; Why, Virtue pined in Want, while Vice rioted in

* —— The *mortal World*,
Which, though to Us it seems embroil'd, moves on
In higher Order; fitted, and impell'd
By *Wisdom*'s finest Hand, and issuing all
In gen'ral Good.
THOMS. *Wint.* l. 586. last Edit.

Affluence. Why, amiable Innocence so often dragged the Dungeon *Chain*, while horrid Guilt trailed the *Robe* of State.—That Day of universal Audit, that Day of everlasting Retribution, will not only *vindicate*, but *magnify*, the whole Management of Heaven. The august Sessions shall close with this unanimous, this glorious Acknowledgment: "Though *Clouds and* "*Darkness*, impenetrable by any human Scru- "tiny, *were* sometimes *round about* the supreme "Conductor of Things; yet *Righteousness and* "*Judgment were the* constant *Habitation of his* "*Seat* *; the invariable Standard of all his Ad- "ministrations."—Thus (if I may illustrate the grandest Truths, by inferior Occurrences) while we view the Arras, on the Side of *least Distinction*, it is void of any elegant Fancy; without any nice Strokes of Art; nothing but a confused Jumble of incoherent Threads. No sooner is the Piece beheld in it's *proper Aspect*, but the suspected Rudeness vanishes, and the most curious Arrangement takes place. We are charmed with Designs of the finest Taste, and Figures of the most graceful Form. All is shaped with Symmetry; all is clad in Beauty.

THE *Goodness* of GOD is most eminently displayed in the Skies.—Could we take an understanding

* Psal. xcvii. 2.

derſtanding Survey, of whatever is formed by the Divine Architect, throughout the whole Extent of *material* Things; our Minds would be tranſported with their Excellencies, and our Tongues echo back that great Encomium, They are "good, very good*." Moſt *beautiful* † in themſelves; contrived by unerring Wiſdom, and executed with inimitable Skill. Moſt *uſeful* † in their Functions; exactly fitting the Places they fill, and completely anſwering the Purpoſes, for which they were intended.—All the Parts of the inanimate Creation proclaim, both by their intrinſic and relative Excellencies, the all-diffuſive Beneficence of their Maker.

* Gen. i. 31.

† † This καλοκαγαθια of the Univerſe, and all it's Parts, has been very highly, and very juſtly extolled, by the antient Inquirers into Nature. And was, indeed, an illuſtrious Scene, ſpread before the Sages of the Heathen World; wherein to contemplate the Goodneſs, and the Glories, of the Supreme Being.—It was nobly ſaid, by a Pagan Philoſopher, on this Occaſion; Εις ερωτα μεταβεβληθηναι τον Θεον μελλοντα δημιουργειν. *That GOD, when he undertook the Work of Creation, transformed Himſelf into Love.*—But he need not *transform* Himſelf into this amiable Principle; for "GOD "*is* Love." As was much more nobly ſaid by One, whom that *Philoſopher* would have termed a *Barbarian*. 1 *John* iv. 8.

How much more wonderful are the Diſplays of Divine Indulgence, in the Worlds of Life! Becauſe, dead Matter is incapable of Delight; therefore, the gracious Creator has raiſed innumerable Ranks of *perceptive Exiſtence*. Such as are qualified to taſte his Bounty, and enjoy each a Happineſs ſuited to it's peculiar State. With this View, He furniſhed the Regions of inferior Nature, with an Order and a Series of ſenſitive Beings. The *Waters* teem with Shoals of finny Inhabitants. The *dry Land* ſwarms with Animals of every Order. The Dwellings of the *Firmament*, are occupied by Multitudes of winged People. Not ſo much as a *green Leaf*, Philoſophers ſay, but lodges, and accommodates, it's puny animalcule Tenants *.—And wherefore this

* A very celebrated Poet, in a beautiful Paragraph on this Subject, informs his Readers, That all Nature ſwarms with Life. In ſubterranean *Cells*, the Earth heaves with vital Motion. Even the hard *Stone*, in the very inmoſt Receſſes of it's impenetrable Citadel, holds Multitudes of animated Inhabitants. The *Pulp* of mellow Fruit, and all the Productions of the Orchard, feed the inviſible Nations. Each *Liquid*, whether of acid Taſte, or milder Reliſh, abounds with various Forms of ſenſitive Exiſtence. Nor is the pure *Stream*, or tranſparent *Air*, without their Colonies of unſeen People.—In which Conſtitution of Things, we have a wonderful Inſtance, not only of the Divine Goodneſs to thoſe minute Beings, in giving them a *Capa-*

this Diverſity, this Profuſion of living Creatures; flying the Air, treading the Ground, and gliding through the Paths of the Sea? For this moſt glorious Reaſon—That the eternal Sovereign may exerciſe his ſuperabundant Goodneſs; that his *Table* may be furniſhed, with Millions and Millions of *Gueſts*; that he may fill, every Hour, every Moment, their Mouths with Food, or their Hearts with Gladneſs.

BUT, what a ſmall Theatre are three or four *Elements*, for the Operations of JEHOVAH'S Bounty! His magnificent Liberality, ſcorns ſuch ſcanty Limits. If you aſk, Wherefore has He created *all Worlds*, and repleniſhed them with an unknown Multiplicity of Beings; riſing, one above another, in an endleſs Gradation of ſtill richer Endowments, and ſtill nobler Capacities? The Anſwer is—For the Manifeſtation of his

 own

city for animal Gratifications; but of his tender Care for Mankind, in making them *imperceptible* to our Senſes.

——These, conceal'd
By the kind Art of forming Heav'n, eſcape
The groſſer Eye of Man: For, if the Worlds
In Worlds inclos'd ſhould on his Senſes burſt;
From Cates ambroſial, and the nectar'd Bowl,
He'd turn abhorrent; and, in dead of Night,
When Silence ſleeps o'er all, be ſtunn'd with Noiſe.

THOMSON's *Summer*.

own Glory, and especially for the *Communication* of his inexhaustible Beneficence *.—The great Creator could propose no Advantage to Himself. His Bliss is incapable of any Addition. "Before the Mountains were brought forth, or "ever the Earth and the World were made," He was supremely happy, in his own independent and all-sufficient Self. His grand Design therefore, in erecting so many stately Fabrics; and peopling them with so many Tribes of Inhabitants; was, To *transfuse* his exuberant Kindness, and *impart* Felicity in all it's Forms. Ten Thousand Worlds, stocked with Ten thousand times Ten thousand Ranks, of sensitive and intelligent Existence, are so many spacious Gardens; which, with Rivers of communicated Joy, this ever-flowing Fountain waters continually.

BOUND-

* A sacred Writer, considering this delightful Subject; and confining his Observation, within the *narrow Limits* of his own Country; cries out, with a Mixture of Amazement and Gratitude; *How great is his Goodness, and how great is his Beauty!*—Who then can forbear being lost in Wonder, and transported with Delight; when he extends his Survey, to those infinitely more *copious Communications* of Divine Bounty; which, like salutary and refreshing Streams, run through all Worlds; and make, not only the *little Valleys* of a single Kingdom, but the Immensity of Creation *laugh and sing?* Zech. ix. 17.

BOUNDLESS*, and (which raiſes our Idea of this divine Principle, to the very higheſt Degree of Perfection) diſintereſted * Munificence! How *inexpreſſibly amiable* is the bleſſed GOD, conſidered in this charming Light! Is it poſſible to conceive any Excellence, ſo adorable and lovely; as infinite Benevolence, guided by unerring Wiſdom, and exerting Almighty Power, on purpoſe to make a whole Univerſe happy?—O my Soul, what an *irreſiſtible Attractive* is here! What a moſt worthy Object, for thy moſt fervent Affection! Shall now every glittering Toy, become a Rival to this tranſcendently beneficent Being, and rob Him of thy Heart?—No. Let his all-creating Arm teach thee, to truſt in the Fulneſs of his Sufficiency:—Let his all ſuperintending Eye incline thee, to acquieſce in the Diſpenſations of his Providence:—And let his Bounty; ſo freely vouchſafed; ſo amply diffuſed; induce thee to *love* Him, with all the Ardor of a grateful and admiring Soul: induce thee to *ſerve* Him, not with a joyleſs Awe, or ſlaviſh Dread, but with unfeigned Alacrity, and a delightful Complacency.

* * In this Senſe, *There is none good, but One, that is GOD.* None univerſally and eſſentially good. None, whoſe Goodneſs extends itſelf, in an infinite *Variety* of Bleſſings, to *every* capable Object; or, who always diſpenſes his Favours, from the *ſole* Principle of *free* and diſintereſted Benevolence.

IF the Goodneſs of GOD is ſo admirably ſeen, in the Works of Nature, and the Favours of Providence; with what a noble Superiority, does it *even triumph*, in the *Myſtery* of *Redemption* * *!* Redemption, is the brighteſt Mirror, in which to contemplate this moſt lovely Attribute of the Deity. Other Gifts, are only as *Mites*, from the Divine Treaſury; but Redemption opens, I had almoſt ſaid exhauſts, all the *Stores* of Indulgence and Grace. Herein, "GOD "*commendeth* his Love †:" not only manifeſts, but

* In this, and in other Parts of the *Contemplations*, the Reader will obſerve; That the Attributes of the DEITY are repreſented, as ſhining, with more diſtinguiſhed Luſtre, in the Wonders of *Redemption*, than in the Works of *Creation*. If *ſuch* Remarks ſhould ſeem to be unprecedented, or to ſtand in Need of a Vindication; permit me to ſubjoin the Sentiments of a great Critic, equally verſed in *both* thoſe ſublime Theories. —"In a perfect Orator, He ſays, *Tully* requires ſome "Skill in the Nature of heavenly Bodies; becauſe "his Mind will become more extenſive and uncon- "fined; and, when He deſcends to treat of human "Affairs, He will both think and write in a more ex- "alted and magnificent Manner. For the ſame Rea- "ſon that excellent Maſter would have recommended "the Study of thoſe great and glorious Myſteries, "which *Revelation* has diſcovered to Us; *to which* "*the nobleſt Parts of this Syſtem of the World are as much* "*inferior, as the Creature is leſs excellent than the Cre-* "*ator.*" *Spect.* Vol. VIII. N° 633.

† Rom. v. 8.

but sets it off, as it were, with every bright and grand Embellishment: manifests it in so stupendous a Manner, that it is beyond Parallel; beyond Thought; "above all Blessing and "Praise."—Was HE not thy *Son*, Everlasting GOD, thy *only* Son; the Son of thy Bosom from eternal Ages; the highest Object of thy complacential Delight? Was not thy Love to this adorable Son, incomparably greater than the tenderest Affection of *Any*, or the united Affections of *All*, mortal Parents? Was not the blessed JESUS more illustrious in Excellency, than all Angels; more exalted in Dignity, than all Heavens? Yet didst thou resign HIM, for poor Mortals; for vile Sinners!—Couldst thou see him descend, from his Royal *Throne*; and take up his Abode, in the sordid *Stable*? See him forego the *Homage* of the Seraphim; and stand exposed to the reproachful *Indignities*, of an insolent Rabble? See Him arraigned at the Bar, and sentenced to Death; numbered with Malefactors, and nailed to the Gibbet; bathed in his own innocent Blood, and pouring out his Soul in Agonies of Sorrow?—Could the Father, the Father *himself*, with unknown Philanthropy *, say? "It shall, it shall, "be so! My Pity to rebellious Man pleads, and "prevails. Awake, therefore, O *Sword* †, "edged with divine Wrath. Awake; and be "sheathed

* *Philanthropy*, that is, Loving-kindness to Man.

† Zech. xiii. 7.

" ſheathed in that *immaculate* Breaſt; pierce that " *dearly beloved* Heart. I am content, that my " Son endure the Sharpneſs of Death, rather than " ſinful Mortals periſh for ever."—Incomprehenſible Love! May it henceward, be the favourite Subject of my *Meditation*; more delightful to my muſing Mind, than Applauſe to the ambitious Ear! May it be the darling Theme of my *Diſcourſe*; ſweeter to my Tongue, than the Droppings of the Honeycomb to my Taſte! May it be my choiceſt *Comfort*, through all the Changes of Life; and my reviving *Cordial*, even in the laſt Extremities of Diſſolution itſelf!

A *PROPHET* contemplating, with a diſtant Survey, this unexampled Inſtance of Almighty Love, is wrapt into a *Tranſport* of *Devotion*. At a Loſs for proper Acknowledgments, he calls upon the whole Univerſe to aid his labouring Breaſt, and ſupply his Lack of Praiſe. *Sing melodiouſly, ye* vaulted *Heavens*; *exult, and even leap for Gladneſs, thou* cumberous *Earth*; *ye Mountains*, break your long Silence, and *burſt into Peals of loudeſt Acclamation* *; *for the* LORD, by

* *Iſa.* xlix. 13.—I have not adhered to our common Tranſlation, but endeavoured to preſerve, ſomewhat more faithfully, the noble *Pathos*, and inimitable *Energy*, of the ſacred Original.—The Love of GOD, manifeſted in a Divine and dying Saviour, is a Bleſſing of ſuch inconceivable Richneſs; as muſt render

by this precious Gift, and this great Salvation, *hath comforted his People.*—A *ſacred Hiſtorian* hath left it upon Record; that, at the firſt Exhibition of this raviſhing Scene, there was with the Angel, who brought the bleſſed Tidings, a Multitude of the heavenly Hoſt; praiſing GOD, and making the Concave of the Skies reſound with their Hallelujahs. At the Dawn of the Sun of Righteouſneſs, when He was beginning to riſe with Healing in his Wings, the *Morning Stars* ſang together, and all the *Sons* of *GOD* ſhouted for Joy.—And ſhall *Man*, whom this gracious Diſpenſation principally reſpects; ſhall *Man*, who is the Centre of all theſe gladdening Rays; ſhall He have no Heart to adore, no Anthem to celebrate, This

Love without End, and without Meaſure Grace?
MILT.

HOW *pure* is the State of the Sky, and how *clear* it's Aſpect! Clearer than the limpid Stream; purer

render all Acknowledgments *flat*, and all Encomiums *languid*. Yet, I think, the moſt poetical and moſt emphatical Celebration of that unſpeakable Inſtance of Goodneſs, is contained in this rapturous Exclamation of the Prophet. Which intimates, with a wonderful Majeſty of Sentiment, that even the whole Compaſs of the *inanimate Creation*; could it be ſenſible of the Benefit, and capable of Delight; would expreſs it's *Gratitude*, in all theſe Demonſtrations of the moſt lively and exuberant Joy.

purer than the transparent Cryſtal; and more curiouſly fine, than the poliſhed Mirror. That *ſtately Cieling*; fretted with Gold, and ſtretched to an Extent of many Millions of Leagues; is not disfigured with a ſingle Flaw. That *azure Canopy*; embroidered with Stars, and ſpacious enough to form a Covering for unnumbered Worlds; is without the leaſt Spot or Wrinkle. —Yet this, even this, will ſcarce yield us, ſo much as a faint Repreſentation of the *Divine Purity*. GOD, is a GOD of matchleſs and tranſcendent Excellency. His Ways are Uprightneſs itſelf. His Counſels and Words are the very Sanctity of Wiſdom and of Truth. The *Laws*, which he has given to univerſal Nature; are exquiſitely contrived, and beyond all Poſſibility of Improvement. The *Precepts*, which He has appointed for the human Race; are a complete Summary, of all that is honourable in itſelf, and perfective of the rational Mind.— Not the leaſt *Overſight*, in planning a Series of Events for all Futurity. Not the leaſt Mal-adminiſtration, in managing the Affairs of every Age, ſince Time began; and of every Nation, under the whole Heavens.—Pardon theſe diſparaging Expreſſions. A *negative* Perfection is far, far beneath thy Dignity, *O Thou moſt Higheſt* *. In all

* *O Thou moſt Higheſt.*—This Expreſſion occurs more than once, in the Pſalms uſed by the Eſtabliſhed Church. It is, I think, one of thoſe *Beauties*; which,

all these Instances; in all thy Acts, and all thy Attributee; Thou art not only holy, but "*glo-*
"*rious* in *Holiness*."

So inconceiveably holy is the LORD GOD of Hosts, that He sees *Defilement* even in the *Bright-*
ness

which, because often exhibited, generally escape our Notice. It is a *Superlative* formed on a Superlative; and, though not strictly conformable to grammatical Rules, is nobly superior to them all.—The Language seems to be sensible of it's own Deficiency; when the incomprehensible JEHOVAH is addressed, or celebrated. Oppressed, as it were, with the Glories of the Subject, it labours after a *more emphatical* manner of Diction, than the ordinary Forms of Speech afford.—It is, if I rightly judge, one of those daring and happy Peculiarities of a masterly Genius, which Mr. POPE so finely describes; and, while he describes, exemplifies:

Great Wits sometimes may *gloriously offend*,
And *rise* to *Faults* true Critics dare not mend;
From vulgar Bounds with brave Disorder part,
And snatch a Grace beyond the Reach of Art.
Essay on Criticism.

St. *Paul's*—ελαχιστοτερος παντων των αγιων—is a beautiful Passage of the like Nature. Which our Translators have very properly rendered; *Less than the least of all Saints*—His πολλω μαλλον κρεισσον is another Instance of the same Kind. But here the *English* Version fails. *Far better* is extremely *flaccid*, compared with the *nervous* Original. And I greatly question, whether it is possible to translate the Sentence, with equal Conciseness, and with equal Spirit. See *Eph.* iii. 8. *Phil.* i. 23.

neſs of the Firmament. The living Sapphire of the Heavens, before his Majeſty, loſes it's Luſtre. *Yea, the Stars* (though the moſt pure and reſplendent Part of the Heavens) *are not pure in his Sight. How much leſs Man, who* in his fallen and depraved State, *is* but as *a Worm*, that crawls in the corrupted Carcaſe; *and the Son of Man, who*, by reaſon of his manifold actual Impurities, *is* too juſtly compared to *an Inſect*, that wallows amidſt Stench and Putrefaction *? — Is there not then abundant Cauſe, for the moſt irre-

* *Job* xxv. 5, 6. I ſubmit it the Judgment of the Learned, Whether this is not the true Meaning of the Text.—It may not, perhaps, recommend itſelf to the *ſqueamiſhly nice* Critic; or to thoſe Perſons who dream of, I know not what, *Dignity* in our fallen Nature. But it ſeems, in Preference to every other Interpretation, *ſuitable* to the ſacred Context; and is far, far from being *injurious* to the Character of that apoſtate Race, which is "altogether become abominable," and "is as an unclean "Thing."—On this Suppoſition, there is not only an apparent, but a very ſtriking Contraſt, between the Purity of GOD, and the Pollution of Man. The *Purity* of the moſt high GOD, which outſhines the Moon, and eclipſes the Stars; the *Pollution* of degenerate Man, which, excluſive of a Saviour, would render him as loathſome to the all-ſeeing Eye, as the vileſt Vermin are in ours.—Without aſſigning this Senſe to the Paſſage, I cannot diſcern the Force of the *Antitheſis*, nor indeed the *Propriety* of the Sentiment. Worms, in the general, give us an Idea of *Meanneſs* and *Infirmity*; not of *Defilement* and *Impurity*.

irreproachable and eminent of Mankind, to renounce all arrogant Pretenſions; to lay aſide every aſſuming Air; to take nothing but *Shame* and Confuſion to themſelves? A holy Prophet, and a holy Prince, felt ſuch humbling Impreſſions, from a Glimpſe of the uncreated Purity. *I abhor myſelf in Duſt and Aſhes* *, was the Declaration of the one: *I am a Man of unclean Lips* †, the Confeſſion of the other.—Should not this teach us all to adore the Divine Mercies, for that precious *purifying Fountain* ‡; which was foretold from the Foundation of the World; but was opened at that awful Juncture, when knotty Whips tore the Fleſh; when ragged Thorns mangled the Temples; when ſharpened Nails cut freſh Sluices for the crimſon Current; when the Gaſh of the Spear compleated the dreadful Work, and *forthwith flowed there*, from the wounded Heart, *Blood and Water?*

ESPE-

purity. Unleſs they are Inſects, hatched amidſt Putrefaction, and conſidered in ſuch noiſome Circumſtances.—The Two Words of the Original, רמה and תולעה are evidently uſed in this Signification, by *Moſes* and *Iſaiah*. By the former, to denote the Vermin, which devoured the *putrefied* Manna; by the latter, to expreſs the Reptiles, which ſwarm in the Body that ſees *Corruption*, *Exod.* xvi. 20. *Iſa.* xiv. 11.

* Job xlii. 6. † Iſa. vi. 5.

‡ *In that Day there ſhall be a Fountain, opened to the Houſe of* David, *and to the Inhabitants of* Jeruſalem, *for Sin and Uncleanneſs*. Zech. xiii. 1.

ESPECIALLY, since GOD himself saw no Blemish in his *dear Son*. *He looketh to the Moon, and it shineth not:* yet his all-penetrating and jealous Eye, discerned nothing amiss, nothing defective, in our glorious Redeemer. Nothing amiss? He bore this most illustrious Testimony, concerning his holy Child JESUS: "In "Him I am *pleased*; I am *well pleased*; I ac- "quiesce, with intire Complacency, and with "the highest Delight, in his Person; his Un- "dertaking; and the whole Execution of his "Office."—How should this Thought, enliven our Hopes; while the other, mortifies our Pride? Should not our Hearts spring within us, and even leap for Joy; at the repeated Assurance given us by Revelation, That such a divinely excellent Person is our Mediator? What apparent Reason has every Believer, to adopt the blessed Virgin's Exclamation! "*My Soul* "*doth magnify the LORD* for his transcendent "Mercy; *and my Spirit rejoices*, not in wide ex- "tended Harvests, waving over my fertile Glebe*; "not in Armies vanquished, and leaving the pe- "culiar Treasure of Nations for my Spoil*; but in "an

** The inspired Penman, from these Two Occasions of distinguished Joy, sets forth the incomparably *greater Delight*, which arises from the Gift of a Saviour, and the Blessing of Redemption. *Isa.* ix. *ver.* 3. compared with *ver.* 6.

"an infinitely richer, nobler Bleſſing, even in "*GOD my Saviour.*"—That a Perſon ſo ſublime and perfect, has vouchſafed to become my *Surety:* to give Himſelf for my *Ranſom*, in the World below; and act as my *Advocate*, in the Royal Preſence above: yea, to make *my* Recovery, the Reward of his Sufferings; *my* final Felicity, the Honour of his mediatorial Kingdom!

WHEN an innumerable Multitude * of Bodies, many of them more than a *Hundred Thouſand Miles* in Diameter †, are ſet all in Motion:—when the Orbits, in which they perform their periodical Revolutions, are extended at the Rate of ſeveral Hundreds of *Millions:*—when each has a *diſtinct* and ſeparate Sphere, for finiſhing his vaſt Circuit:—when no one knows, what it is to be cramped; but each moſt *freely expatiates*, in his unbounded Career:—when every one is placed, at ſuch an *immenſe Remove* from each other: that they appear to their reſpective

* This refers, not only to the Planets which paſs and repaſs about our Sun, but alſo to the other Planetary Worlds, which are ſuppoſed to attend the ſeveral fixed Stars.

† The Diameter of *Jupiter* is calculated at 130,650 Miles, while his Orbit is reckoned to conſiſt of 895,134,000. Which Computation, according to the Maxims of Aſtronomy, and the Laws of Proportion, may, as is taken for granted in the Contemplations, be applied to *other Planets* revolving round *other Suns*.

Inhabitants, only as so many Spots of Light:—How astonishing must be the Expanse, which yields *Room* for all those mighty Globes, and their widely-diffused Operations! To what prodigious Lengths, did the Almighty Builder stretch his Line, when He marked out the stupendous Platform!—I wonder at such an immeasurable Extent. My very Thoughts are lost, in this Abyss of Space. But, be it known to Mortals; be it never forgot by Sinners; that, in all it's most surprising Amplitude, it is *small*, it is *scanty*, compared with the Bounty and the Mercy of it's Maker.

His *Bounty* is absolutely without Limits *, and without End. The most lavish Generosity cannot exhaust, or even diminish, his Munificence. O! all ye Tribes of Men; or rather, all ye Classes of intelligent Creatures; ye are not streightened in the *Liberality* of your ever-blessed Creator; be not streightened in your own *Expectations*.

* By *Bounty*, I mean, not the actual Exercise, or the sensible Effects, of this Excellency in the Deity. These *are*, and always *must be*, through the immense Perfection of the Attribute, and the necessary Scantiness of the Recipient, bounded. But, I would be understood, as speaking of the Divine *Power*, and the Divine *Will*, to exert Divine Beneficence. These can have no real, no imaginable Limits. These after a Profusion of Blessings, distributed to unnumbered Worlds, continued through unnumbered Ages, must *still* have more to bestow; for *ever* have more to bestow; *infinitely* more to bestow, than it is possible for Creation itself to receive.

tations. "Open your Mouth wide, and He ſhall "fill it," with copious and continual Draughts from the Cup of Joy. Your GOD, on whom is your whole Dependence, is more than able; is more than willing; to "ſupply all your Need, "according to his Riches in Glory."—When the LORD JEHOVAH is the Giver, and his Grace * the Gift; let your Wiſhes be unbounded, and your Cravings inſatiable. All that created Beings can poſſibly *covet*, is but a very ſmall Pittance of that unknown Happineſs, which the Everlaſting Benefactor is ready to *beſtow*. Suppoſe every charitable Diſpoſition, which warms the Hearts of the human Race, added to thoſe more inlarged Affections, which glow in heavenly Boſoms; what were they all, even in their higheſt Exerciſe, compared with the Benignity of the Divine Nature?—Bleſs *me* then, Thou eternal Source of Love; bleſs *all* that reverence thy holy Name; according to thy own moſt profuſe Goodneſs. Whoſe great Prerogative it is, to diſdain all Meaſure. O! bleſs us, in proportion to that Grace; the Richneſs of which (unutterable by the Tongues

* 2 *Cor.* ix. 8. *GOD is able to make* all *Grace* abound *towards you, that ye, having* all Sufficiency *in* all things, *may* abound *to* every *good Work*.—How beautiful, and emphatical, is this Deſcription! Inferior to nothing, but that Extent of Ability, and thoſe Riches of Liberality, which it ſo eloquently celebrates. Does it not *exhauſt* all the Powers of Language; while it attempts to give us a *Specimen*, of the Munificence of the LORD?

of Men, and of Angels) was once *ſpoken* in the Groans, and *written* in the Wounds, of thy expiring Son!

SPACIOUS indeed are theſe Heavens! Where do they begin? Where do they end? What is their Extent? Can Angels anſwer my Queſtion? Have Angels travelled the vaſt Circuit? Can Angels meaſure the Bounds of Space? No; 'tis boundleſs, 'tis unknown, 'tis amazing all.—How charming then to reflect, That the *Mercy* of GOD is "greater than the Heavens;" is more extenſive than the Dimenſions of the Sky. Tranſporting Reflection! Let me indulge Thee once more *. Let me think over the delightful Diſplays of this lovely Attribute; and, while I admire the *Trophies* of forgiving Goodneſs, add one to the Number.—With what amiable and affecting Colours, is this repreſented in the *Parable*

* *Once more* refers to Page 116. of *Reflections on a Flower-Garden*.—The following Pages, to the 187th, exhibit a *digreſſive* View of the Divine Mercy. I thought it proper to appriſe my Reader of this Excurſion; though, I hope, it will be needleſs to offer an Apology, for enlarging upon a Theme incomparably joyous. Who can complain of *Tediouſneſs*, while I ſpeak Conſolation to diſtreſſed, and Recovery to ruined Creatures? The Divine Mercy is the ſole Fountain of all our preſent and future Bleſſings. In Conformity to this benign Attribute, human Hopes ariſe, and human Felicity flows. Who, therefore, can be weary of *viewing* and *reviewing*; when the Lengths and Breadths of forgiving Grace, are the raviſhing Proſpect?

vable of the *Prodigal!* What could induce that foolish Youth, to forsake his Father's House? Had he not been tenderly cherished by the good Parent; and loaded with Benefits, from his indulgent Hand? Were not the Restraints of parental Government, an easy Yoke? or rather, a *Preservative* from *Ruin?* Notwithstanding every endearing Obligation, he revolts from his Duty; and launches into such scandalous Irregularities, as were dishonourable to his Family, and destructive to himself.—When Necessity, not Choice, but sharp Necessity drove him to a submissive Return; does the injured Father stand aloof, or shut his Doors? Quite the Reverse. He espies him, while he is yet a *great Way off*; and, the Moment he beholds the profligate Youth, He *has Compassion on him.* His Bowels yearn; they "sound like an Harp," touched with Notes divinely soft. He never once thinks of his ungracious Departure, and infamous Debaucheries. Pity, parental Pity, passes an Act of Oblivion; and, in one Instant, cancels a Series of long-continued Provocations.—So strong are the Workings of fatherly Affection; that he is almost impatient to embrace the naked and destitute Wretch. The Son's Pace is slow, *He arose and came*; the Father's is swift, He sprung forth (aged as he was) and *ran.* And is there a single Frown in his Brow, or one upbraiding Word on his Tongue?—Instead of loathing the sordid Creature, or reproaching him for his odious Excesses;

he *falls* on his *Neck*, clasps Him in his Arms, and hugs him to his Bosom. Instead of disowning the riotous Spendthrift, or rejecting him for his undutiful Behaviour; He receives and welcomes Him with *Kisses* of Delight. He rejoices, at his Return from Extravagance and Vice; as he formerly rejoiced, on the Day of his Nativity.—When this Companion of Harlots opens his Mouth, *before he speaks, the Father hears.* He interrupts him, in the midst of his intended Speech. The Overflowings of his compassionate Heart can brook no Delay. He seems to be *uneasy* himself, till he has made the afflicted Penitent *glad*, with the Assurance of his Acceptance, and the choicest of his Favours.—While the poor abashed Offender seeks nothing more, than not to be abhorred; he is thoroughly reconciled, and honoured before the whole Family. While he requests no other Indulgence, than only to be treated as the *meanest Servant*; he is cloathed with the *best Robe*; he is feasted with the *fatted Calf*; he is caressed as the dearest of Children.—Was there ever so bright and winning a Picture, of the tendereſt Mercy; most freely vouchsafed, even to the most unworthy of Creatures? Yet *thus*, my Soul; and *thus*, my Fellow-sinner; will the LORD GOD of everlasting Compassions receive us; if, sensible of our Misery, and thirsting for Salvation, we turn to him through JESUS CHRIST.

WHERE Sin has abounded, says the Proclamation from the Court of Heaven, *Grace*

doth

doth much more abound.—*Manaſſeh* was a Monſter of Barbarity; for he cauſed his own Children to paſs through the Fire, and filled *Jeruſalem* with innocent Blood. *Manaſſeh* was an Adept in Iniquity; for He not only multiplied, and to an extravagant Degree, his own ſacrilegious Impieties; but he poiſoned the Principles, and perverted the Manners of his Subjects, *making them to do worſe than the* moſt deteſtable of the *Heathen* Idolaters *. Yet, through this ſuper-abundant Grace, He is humbled; He is reformed; and becomes a Child of forgiving Love, an Heir of immortal Glory.—Behold that bitter and bloody Perſecutor *Saul*; when, breathing out Threatenings †, and

* See 2 *Chron.* xxxiii.

† *Acts* ix. 1. Σαυλος ἐτι εμπνεων απειλης και φονου, *Saul yet breathing out Threatening and Slaughter.* —What a Repreſentation is here of a Mind, *mad* with *Rage*, and abandoned to the fierceſt Extremes of Barbarity! I ſcarce know, whether I am more *ſhocked* at the Perſecutor's ſavage Diſpoſition, or *charmed* with the Evangeliſt's lively Deſcription.—The Adverb ἐτι ſeems referable to Chap. viii. Ver. 3. and has, in this Connexion, a peculiar Force. The Havock he had committed, the inoffenſive Families he had *already* ruined, were not ſufficient to aſſwage his vengeful Spirit. They were only a *Taſte*; which, inſtead of glutting the Blood-hound, made him more cloſely purſue the Track, and more eagerly pant for Deſtruction. He is *ſtill* athirſt for Violence and Murder. So eager and inſatiable is his Thirſt, that he even *breathes out* Threatening and Slaughter. His Words are Spears and Arrows, and his Tongue

and bent upon Slaughter, he worried the Lambs, and put to Death the Disciples of JESUS. Who, upon the Principles of human Judgment, would not have pronounced *Him* a Vessel of Wrath, destined to unavoidable Damnation? Nay, would not have been ready to conclude; that, if there were heavier Chains, and a deeper Dungeon, in the World of Woe; they must surely be reserved, for such an implacable Enemy of true Godliness? Yet, (admire, and adore, the inexhaustible Treasures of Grace!) this *Saul*, is admitted into the goodly Fellowship of the Prophets; is numbered with the noble Army of Martyrs; and makes a distinguished Figure among the glorious Company of the Apostles.—The *Corinthians*, were flagitious even to a Proverb. Some of them wallowed in such abominable Vices, and habituated themselves to such outrageous Acts of Injustice, as were a Reproach to human Nature. Yet, even these Sons of Violence, and Slaves of Sensuality, "were washed; were sanctified; "were justified *." *Washed*, in the precious Blood of a dying Redeemer; *sanctified*, by the powerful

a sharp Sword. 'Tis as natural for him to *menace* the Christians, as to breathe the Air.—Nay, they *bleed* every Hour, every Moment, in the Purposes of his rancorous Heart. It is only owing to Want of Power, that every Syllable he utters, every Breath he draws, does not deal about Deaths, and cause some of the innocent Disciples to fall.

* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10, 11.

ful Operations of the Bleſſed Spirit; *juſtified*, through the infinitely tender Mercies of a gracious GOD. Thoſe, who were once the Burden of the Earth, are now the Joy of Heaven, and the Delight of Angels.

THERE is another Inſtance in Scripture, which moſt loudly publiſhes that ſweeteſt of the Divine Names, *The LORD, the LORD GOD, merciful and gracious, long-ſuffering, and abundant in Goodneſs and Truth; keeping Mercy for Thouſands, forgiving Iniquity, Tranſgreſſion, and Sin* *. An Inſtance this, which exceeds all the former; which exceeds whatever can be imagined; which if I was to forget, the very Stones might cry out, and ſound it in my Ears. I mean the Caſe of thoſe Sinners, who murdered the *Prince* of *Peace*, and LORD of Glory.—Theſe Men, could ſcarce have the Shadow of an Excuſe for their Crime; hardly a Circumſtance, to extenuate their Guilt. They were well acquainted with his exemplary Converſation; they had often heard his heavenly Doctrines; they were almoſt daily Spectators of his unequalled Miracles. They therefore had all poſſible Reaſon to *honour* Him, as the moſt illuſtrious of Beings; and to *receive* his Goſpel, as the moſt ineſtimable of Bleſſings. Yet, notwithſtanding all theſe engaging Motives to love Him, even above their own Lives; they ſeize his Perſon; aſperſe his Character; drag him before a heathen Tribunal; and extort a Sentence of Death,

* Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.

Death, againſt Innocence and Holineſs itſelf. Never was the *vileſt Slave*, ſo contumeliouſly abuſed; nor the moſt *execrable Malefactor*, ſo barbarouſly executed. The Sun was confounded at the ſhocking Scene; and one cannot but wonder, how the avenging Lightnings could with-hold their Flaſhes. The Earth trembled at the horrid Deed; and why, why did it not cleave aſunder, and open a Paſſage, for ſuch Blood-thirſty Miſcreants, into the nethermoſt Hell? Shall *Theſe* ever hope to obtain Forgiveneſs, from the righteous Judge? Shall not *Theſe* be conſigned over to inexorable Wrath, and the ſevereſt Torments?—O the miraculous Effects of Divine Grace! O the triumphant Goodneſs of GOD our Saviour! Many, even of *theſe* impious Wretches, at the Deſcent of the Holy Ghoſt, were convinced of their miſerable State; were wounded with penitential Remorſe; fled to the Sanctuary of the Croſs; had their Pardon ratified by the baptiſmal Seal; and, continuing in the Apoſtles Doctrine, were made Partakers of the Kingdom of Heaven. Where they now ſhine, as ſo many everlaſting *Monuments* of moſt diſtinguiſhed *Mercy*; and receive Beatitude paſt Utterance, from that very Redeemer, whom once "with wicked Hands they crucified and ſlew."

WELL might the Prophet cry out, with a pleaſing Amazement; "Who is a GOD like unto "Thee, that pardoneth Iniquity, and paſſeth by "Tranſgreſſion *!"—Let all Fleſh know aſ-

ſuredly;

* Mic. vii. 18.

ſuredly; let all Fleſh rejoice greatly; That with the LORD there is *ſuch Mercy*, and with his CHRIST *ſuch plentiful Redemption.*—And O! for the Voice of an Arch-Angel, to circulate the Glad-Tidings through the Univerſe. That the *American* Savage, as well as the *European* Sage, may learn the *exceeding Riches of Grace* in Chriſt. Through whoſe infinitely ſatisfying Propitiation, all Manner of Sin, Barbarity, and Blaſphemy, are freely forgiven unto Men.

WHAT a grand, and majeſtic *Dome*, is the Sky! Where are the *Pillars*, which ſupport the ſtately Concave? What Art, moſt exactly true, balanced the Preſſure? What Props, of inſuperable Strength, ſuſtain the Weight? How is that immeaſurable Arch *upheld*, unſhaken and unimpaired; while ſo many Generations of buſy Mortals have *ſunk* and diſappeared, as Bubbles upon the Stream?—If thoſe Stars are of ſuch an amazing Bulk; how are they alſo *faſtened*, in their lofty Situation? By what Miracle in Mechanics, are ſo many Thouſands of ponderous Orbs, kept from falling upon our Heads; kept from daſhing, both the World to Pieces, and it's Inhabitants to Death? Are they hung in golden, or adamantine, Chains? Reſt they their enormous Load, on Rocks of Marble, or Columns of Braſs?—No; they are *pendulous* in fluid Æther. Yet, are more immoveably *fixed*, than if the everlaſting Mountains lent their

Foreſts, for an Axle-Tree; or their Ridges, for a Baſis. The Almighty Architect *ſtretches out the North*, and it's whole ſtarry Train, *over the empty Place*. He *hangs the Earth*, and all the ethereal Globes, *upon nothing* *. Yet are their Foundations laid ſo ſure, that they can "never be moved "at any Time."

No unfit Repreſentation, to the *ſincere* Chriſtian, of his *final* Perſeverance †: ſuch as points out

* Job xxvi. 7.

† With regard to the *final Perſeverance* of the true Believer; I am ſenſible, this Point is not a little controverted.—The Sentiments, which follow, are *my* ſtedfaſt Belief. It is by no means proper, in a Work of this Nature, to enter upon a Diſcuſſion of the Subject. Neither have I Room, ſo much as to hint, what might be urged for it's Support.—Let my Reader obſerve, that I am far from delivering it, as eſſential to Chriſtianity, or neceſſary to Salvation. Millions, of the very contrary Conviction, are, I doubt not, high in the Favour of God; and in a growing Meetneſs for his heavenly Kingdom. As I blame none for *rejecting*, none, I hope, will be offended with me for *eſpouſing* this particular Doctrine. —To be of different Opinions, at leaſt in ſome inferior Inſtances, ſeems an unavoidable Conſequence of our preſent State: where *Ignorance*, in Part, cleaves to the wiſeſt Minds; and *Prejudice* eaſily beſets the moſt impartial Judgments. This may turn to our common Advantage; and afford Room for the Diſplay and Exerciſe of thoſe *healing* Virtues, Moderation, Meekneſs, and Forbearance.—Let me only be permitted to aſk, whether this Tenet does not evidently tend to eſtabliſh the *Comfort* of the Chriſtian, and to magnify the *Fidelity* of God our Saviour?

out the Cause, which effects it; and constitutes the Pledge, which ascertains it.—His Nature is all enfeebled. He is not able, of himself, to think a good Thought. He has no *visible* Safeguard, nor any Sufficiency of his *own*. And yet, Saviour? Whether, far from countenancing Sloth, or encouraging Remissness, to *know* that our Labour shall not be in vain, is not the most prevailing Inducement to *abound* in the Work of the LORD? 1 *Cor.* xv. 58.

Is any One inclined to examine the Reasons, which made the Author a Proselyte to this Persuasion? He may find them displayed in the Memorial, delivered by several select and eminent Divines of the Church of *England*, at the renowned Synod of *Dordt*. —(See *Acta Synod. Dordrech.* Par. II. Pag. 246. of the *Latin* Edition, published in a single Quarto Volume.) —Those, who have no Opportunity of consulting the Memoirs of that venerable Assembly; I would refer to the Works of the indefatigable and very learned *Turrentin*, or to those of the candid and elegant *Witsius*. —Turret. Tom. II. Q. xvi. Witsius. Oecon. Lib. III. Cap. xiii.

The latest and fullest View of the Point, which I ever remember to have met with, in any of our *English* Writers, is in the *Lime-street Lectures*. Which are a Defence of several most important Doctrines of the Gospel, and contained in two Octavo Volumes, the united Labours of *nine* modern Divines; most of whom, are *well* known to the World by their *other* evangelical and useful Writings. In those Lectures, the final Perseverance of the Saints, is very particularly stated: and, to *my* Apprehension at least, most satisfactorily proved. The Arguments, usually urged against it, are impartially considered; and I cannot but think (with all due Deference to the Judgment of others) unanswerably confuted.

yet, whole Legions of formidable Enemies, are in a Confederacy to compaſs his Ruin. The *World*, lays unnumbered Snares for his Feet: the *Devil*, is inceſſantly urging the Siege, by a Multitude of fiery Darts, or wily Temptations: the *Fleſh*, like a perfidious Inmate, under Colour of Friendſhip, and a ſpecious Pretence of Pleaſure, is always forward to betray his Integrity.—But, amidſt all theſe threatening Circumſtances, of perſonal Weakneſs, and imminent Danger, an inviſible Aid is his Defence. "*I will uphold thee*, ſays the "bleſſed GOD, *with the Right Hand of my Righ-* "*teouſneſs* *." Comfortable Truth! The Arm, which fixes the Stars in their Orders, and guides the Planets in their Courſe, is ſtretched out to preſerve the Heirs of Salvation. "—*My Sheep*, "adds the great Redeemer, *are mine*; *and they* "*ſhall never periſh*, *neither ſhall any pluck them out* "*of my Hand* †." What Words are theſe! And did they come from HIM, who hath all Power in Heaven, and on Earth? And were they ſpoke to the weakeſt of the Flock; to every unfeigned Follower of the great Shepherd? Then, Omnipotence itſelf muſt be *vanquiſhed*; before they can be

And here (not to ſwell this Note any farther) I ſhall only juſt hint; that the judicious *Hooker* (an Authority, perhaps, as weighty and unexceptionable as any that can well be produced) gives a *ſolemn Atteſtation* to this Tenet, in a ſhort Diſcourſe on the Perpetuity of Faith, ſubjoined to his *Eccleſiaſtical Polity*. Fol. Edit.

* Iſa. xli. 10. † John x. 28.

be *deſtroyed*, either by the Seductions of Fraud, or the Aſſaults of Violence.

IF you aſk therefore, What Security we have, of enduring to the End, and continuing faithful unto Death?—The very *ſame* that eſtabliſhes the Heavens, and ſettles the Ordinances of the Univerſe. Can *theſe* be thrown into Confuſion *? Then, may the true Believer draw back unto Perdition. Can the Sun be diſlodged from his Sphere, and ruſh lawleſly through the Sky? Then, and then only, can the Faith of GOD's Elect † be *finally* overthrown.—Be of good Courage then, my Soul; rely on thoſe Divine Succours, which are ſo ſolemnly ſtipulated, ſo faithfully promiſed. Though thy Grace be languid, as the glimmering Spark; though the Overflowings of Corruption, threaten it with total Extinction; yet, ſince the great JEHOVAH has undertaken to cheriſh the dim Principle, "many Waters can-"not quench it, nor all Floods drown it." Nay, tho' it were feeble as the *ſmoking Flax* ‡, Goodneſs and Faithfulneſs ſtand engaged, to augment the Heat; to raiſe the Fire, and feed the Flame; till it beam forth, a Lamp of immortal Glory, in the Heavens.

As

* Jer. xxxi. 35, 36. † Tit. i. 2.

‡ The *Tenderneſs* and *Faithfulneſs* of GOD to his People, are finely pictured by the Prophet *Iſaiah*, Chap. xlii. Ver. 3. Which Paſſage, becauſe of it's rich Conſolation, and uncommon Beauty, is deſervedly adopted by St. *Matthew*, and ingrafted into the Syſtem

As to the *Faithfulneſs* of a covenanting GOD; this may be emblematically ſeen, in the Stability of the heavenly Bodies, and the Perpetuity of their Motions *.—Thoſe that are *fixed* or *ſtationary*, continue unalterable in their grand Elevations. No injurious Shocks; no Violence of conflicting Elements; are able to diſplace thoſe everlaſting Hinges, on which dependent Worlds revolve. Through the whole Flight of Time, they recede

Syſtem of evangelical Truths.—*He will not* himſelf *break*, nor ſuffer to be broken by any other, *the bruiſed Reed*; *nor quench the ſmoking Flax*. Was it poſſible, to have choſen two more delicate, and expreſſive Repreſentations?—Could any Image, be more ſignificant of a very infirm, and enfeebled *Faith*; than the flexile *Reed*, that bends before every Wind? Which, beſides it's natural Weakneſs, is made abundantly weaker by being *bruiſed:* and ſo, is ready to fall in Pieces of itſelf.—Or could any Thing, with a more pathetical Exactneſs, deſcribe the extreme Imbecillity, of that other Principle of the Divine Life, *Love?* The State of the *Flax*, juſt beginning to burn, is liable to be put out by the leaſt Blaſt: more liable ſtill, is the Wick of the Lamp, when it is not ſo much as kindled into a glimmering Flame, but only *breathing Smoke*, and uncertain whether it ſhall take Fire or no.—Yet true Faith, and heavenly Love, though ſubſiſting amidſt ſuch pitiable Infirmities, will not be abandoned by their great Author; ſhall not be extinguiſhed by any Temptations; but be maintained, invigorated, and made finally triumphant. *Matt.* xii. 20.

* Pſal. cxix. 89, 90.

cede not, so much as a Hair's Breadth, from the precise central Point of their respective Systems. —While the *Erratic*, or *Planetary*, perform their prodigious Stages, without any Intermission, or the least Embarrassment. How soon, and how easily, is the most finished Piece of human Machinery disconcerted! But all the celestial Movements, are so nicely adjusted; all their Operations, so critically proportioned; and their mutual Dependencies, so strongly connected; that they prolong their beneficial Courses, throughout all Ages. —While *mighty Cities* are overwhelmed with Ruin, and their very Names lost in Oblivion: While *vast Empires* are swept from their Foundations, and leave not so much as a shadowy Trace of their antient Magnificence: While *all terrestrial* Things are subject to Vicissitude, and fluctuating in Uncertainty: *These* are permanent in their Duration. *These* are invariable in their Functions. "Not one faileth."—Who doubts the constant Succession, of Day and Night; or the regular Returns, of Summer and Winter? And why, O! why shall we doubt the *Veracity* of GOD, or distrust the *Accomplishment* of his holy Word? Can the Ordinances of Heaven depart? Then only can GOD forget to be gracious; or neglect the Performance of his Promise.—Nay, our LORD gives us yet firmer Ground of Affiance. He affords us a surer Bottom for our Faith, than the

fundamental Laws of the Univerſe. *Heaven and Earth*, He ſays, *ſhall paſs away*; *but my Words ſhall not*, in a ſingle Inſtance, or in one Tittle of their Import, *paſs away*. No: his ſacred Word, whatever may obſtruct it; whoever may oppoſe it; ſhall be fulfilled to the very uttermoſt.

O powerful Word! How aſtoniſhing is it's Efficacy! When this Word was iſſued forth, a thouſand Worlds emerged out of nothing. Should the mighty Orders be repeated, a thouſand more would ſpring into Exiſtence. By this Word, the vaſt Syſtem of created Things is *upheld*, in conſtant and immutable Perfection. Should it give Command, or ceaſe to exert it's Energy; the univerſal Frame would be diſſolved, and all Nature revert to her original Chaos. And this very Word is *pledged* for the Safety, the Comfort, the Happineſs of the Godly. This inviolable, this Almighty Word, *ſpeaks* in all the Promiſes of the Goſpel.—How ſtrangely infatuated are our Souls, that we ſhould value it ſo little? What Infidels are we in fact, that we ſhould depend upon it no more? Did it *create*, whatever has a Being; and ſhall it not *work* Faith, in our Breaſts? Do unnumbered Worlds, owe their Support to this World; and ſhall it not be ſufficient, to buoy up our Souls in Troubles, or eſtabliſh them in Trials? Is it the *Life* of the Univerſe, and ſhall it be a *dead* Letter to Mankind?

IF I wiſh to be heard, when I implore heavenly Bleſſings; is not *this Privilege* moſt clearly made over to my Enjoyment, in that well-known Text, "Aſk, and it ſhall be given you *?" —If I long for the Eternal Comforter, to dwell in my Heart, and ſanctify my Nature; have I not an apparent Title to this *high Prerogative*, conferred in that ſweet aſſertive Interrogation; "How much "more ſhall your heavenly Father, give the Holy "Spirit to thoſe that aſk him †?"—If I earneſtly covet the ineſtimable Treaſures, that are compriſed in the great IMMANUEL's Mediation; can I have a firmer Claim to the *noble Portion*, than is granted in that moſt precious Scripture; "Him that cometh to Me, I will in no-wiſe "caſt out ‡?"—What Aſſurance, of being intereſted in theſe unſpeakable Mercies, would I deſire? What *Form* of *Conveyance*; what *Deed* of *Settlement*; were it left to my own Option, ſhould I chooſe? Here is the Word of a King; the King immortal and inviſible; all whoſe Declarations ‖ are Truth itſelf.—If a Monarch beſtow Immunities on a Body of Men, and confirm them by an authentic Charter; no one controverts,

* Mat vii. 7. † Luke xi. 13. ‡ John vi. 37.

‖ — — — — If *theſe* fail,
The pillar'd Firmament is Rottenneſs,
And Earth's Baſe built on Stubble.
MILT. *Comus.*

troverts, no one queſtions, their Right to the Royal Favours. And why ſhould we ſuſpect the *Validity* of thoſe glorious Grants, which are made by the everlaſting Sovereign of Nature; which He has alſo *ratified* by an Oath, and *ſealed* with the Blood of his Son?—Corporations may be disfranchiſed, and Charters revoked. Even Mountains may be removed, and Stars drop from their Spheres. But a Tenure, founded on the Divine Promiſe, is unalienably *ſecure*; is *laſting*, as Eternity itſelf.

WE have endeavoured to ſpell a *Syllable* of the eternal Name, in the ancient Manuſcript of the Sky. We have catched a *Glimpſe* of the Almighty's Glory, from the Luſtre of innumerable Stars. But, would we behold all his Excellencies, pourtrayed in *full* Perfection; and drawn to the very Life; let us attentively conſider the REDEEMER.—I obſerve, there are ſome Parts of the Firmament, in which the Stars ſeem, as it were, to *cluſter*. They are ſown thicker, they lie cloſer, than uſual; and ſtrike the Eye, with redoubled Splendor. Like the Jewels on a Crown, they mingle their Beams; and reflect an Increaſe of Brillancy, on each other.—Is there not ſuch an Aſſemblage, ſuch a *Conſtellation* of the Divine Honours, moſt amiably effulgent in the bleſſed JESUS.

DOES

DOES not infinite *Wiſdom* * ſhine, with ſurpaſſing Brightneſs, in CHRIST? To the Making of a World, there was no Obſtacle; but to the Saving of Man, there ſeemed to be unſurmountable Bars. If the Rebel is ſuffered to eſcape; where is the *inflexible Juſtice*, which denounces "Death as the Wages of Sin?" If the Offender is thoroughly pardoned; where is the *inviolable Veracity*, which has ſolemnly declared, "The "Soul that ſinneth, ſhall die?" Theſe awful Attributes are ſet in terrible Array; and, like an impenetrable Battalion, oppoſe the Salvation of apoſtate Mankind. Who can ſuggeſt a Method to *abſolve* the traiterous Race; yet vindicate the Honours of Almighty Sovereignty? This is an Intricacy, which, the moſt exalted of finite Intelligencies, are unable to clear.—But, behold the *unſearchable Secret* revealed! revealed in the wonderful Redemption, accompliſhed by a dying Saviour! So plainly revealed, that "He who runs "may read;" and even *Babes* underſtand, what Minds of the deepeſt Penetration could not contrive.—The Son of GOD, taking our Nature, obeys the Law, and undergoes Death, in our Stead. By this means, the threatened *Curſe* is executed, in all it's Rigour; and free *Grace* is exerciſed, in all it's Riches. Juſtice maintains her Rights, and, with a ſteady Hand, adminiſ-

* See the next Note.

ter: impartial Vengeance; while Mercy dispenses her Pardons, and welcomes the repentant Criminal into the tendereſt Embraces. Hereby, the ſeemingly thwarting Attributes are reconciled. The Sinner is ſaved, not only in *full Conſiſtence*, with the Honour of the ſupreme Perfections; but to the moſt *illuſtrious Manifeſtation* of them all.

WHERE does the Divine *Power* * ſo ſignally exert itſelf, as in the Croſs of CHRIST, and in the Conqueſts of Grace?—Our LORD, in his loweſt State of Humiliation, gained a more glorious Victory; than when, through the dividing Sea, and the waſte howling Wilderneſs, "He "rode upon his Chariots and Horſes of Salva-"tion." When his Hands were riveted, with Irons, to the bloody Tree; He diſarmed Death of it's Sting, and plucked the Prey from the Jaws of Hell. Then, even then, while he was crucified in *Weakneſs*, He vanquiſhed the *ſtrong Man*, and ſubdued our moſt formidable Enemies. Even then, he ſpoiled Principalities; triumphed over the Powers of Darkneſs; and led Captivity captive.—Now he is exalted to his heavenly Throne, with what a prevailing Efficacy does his Grace

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* CHRIST, *the Wiſdom GOD, and the Power of GOD.* 1 Cor. i. 24.—*To the Intent that now, unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church* (by the amazing Contrivance, and Accompliſhment of it's Redemption) *the* deep, extenſive, and (πολυποικιλος) *greatly diverſified Wiſdom of GOD.* Eph. iii. 10.

go forth, "conquering, and to conquer!"—By this, the *Slaves* of Sin are rescued from their Bondage, and restored to the *Liberty* of Righteousness. By this, depraved Wretches, whose Appetites were *sensual*, and their Dispositions *devilish*; are not only renewed, but renewed after the Image of GOD, and made Partakers of a *Divine* Nature. Millions, Millions of lost Creatures are snatched, by the Interposition of Grace, like *Brands* from the Burning; and translated into everlasting Mansions, shine brighter than the *Stars*, shine bright as the *Sun*, in the Kingdom of their Father.

WOULD you then see an incomparably more bright Display of the Divine Excellence, than the unspotted Firmament, the Spangles of Heaven, or the golden Fountain of Day exhibit? Contemplate JESUS of *Nazareth*. He is the Brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person. In his immaculate Nature; in his heavenly Tempers; in his most holy Life; the *moral Perfections* of the Deity are represented, to the highest Advantage *.—Hark! how *Mercy*, with her charming Voice, speaks in all He utters. See! how *Benevolence* pours her choicest Stores, in all He does. Did ever Compassion

* In this Sense, that Saying of our LORD is eminently true, *He that hath seen ME, hath seen the FATHER*, John xiv. 9.

look so amiably soft, as in those pitying Tears; which swelled his Eyes, and trickled down his Cheeks, to bedew the Rancour of his inveterate Enemies?—Was it possible for *Patience* to assume a Form so lovely; as that sweetly-winning Conduct, which bore the Contradiction of Sinners? Which intreated the Obstinate, to be reconciled; besought the Guilty, not to die?—In other Things, we may find some *scattered* Rays of JEHOVAH's Glory; but in CHRIST they are all collected and united. In CHRIST, they beam forth, with the strongest Radiance, with the most delightful Effulgence. *Out of Sion*, and in *Sion*'s great Reedemer, *hath GOD appeared in perfect Beauty.*

SEARCH then, my Soul, above all other Pursuits, search the Records of redeeming Love. Let these be the principal Objects of thy Study. Here employ thyself, with the most unwearied Assiduity.—*In these are hid all the Treasures of Wisdom and Knowledge* *. *Such Wisdom*; as charms

* *Coloss.* ii. 3.—Not a mean Degree, but a *Treasure*; not one Treasure, but *many*; not many only, but *all* Treasures, of true Wisdom, and saving Knowledge; are in CHRIST, and his glorious Gospel.—The transcendent *Excellency* of those Treasures seems to be finely intimated, in that other Expression ἀποκρυφοι, *hid*; (which may be interpreted by the *Hebrew* מטמונים, *Job* iii. 21.) *laid up*, with the utmost Care, and the greatest Safety. Not left at

charms and aſtoniſhes the very Angels: Engages their cloſeſt Attention, and fills them with the deepeſt Adoration *. *Such Knowledge*; as qualifies the Poſſeſſor, if not for Offices of Dignity on Earth, yet for the moſt honourable Advancements in the Kingdom of Heaven. Diſunited from which Knowledge, all Application is but elaborate Impertinence; and all Science, no better than pompous Ignorance.—Theſe Records contain the faultleſs Model of Duty, and the nobleſt

at all Adventures, to be ſtumbled upon, by every giddy Wanderer; or to fall into the Arms of the yawning Sluggard; but, like Jewels of the brighteſt Luſtre, or Riches of the higheſt Value, *kept in Store* to adorn and reward the diligent Searcher.

* This, I believe, is the *Import* of the Apoſtle's Language, though it is not a *literal* Tranſlation of εις α επιθυμουσιν αγγελοι παρακυψαι. 1 *Pet.* i. 12.—I never had ſuch a lively Apprehenſion of the beautiful Significancy of the laſt Word, as when I have attended a Diſſection of ſome Part of the animal Body. In order to diſcern the *Minutiæ* of the admirable Frame; the latent Wonders of Art and Mechaniſm; the Eye is ſo ſharpened, and it's Application ſo *intenſely bended*, as gives a very juſt *experimental* Comment on that expreſſive Phraſe, παρακυψαι. —With ſuch earneſt Attention, is the everlaſting Goſpel contemplated, by the *Angelic* Orders! How much more, if it were poſſible, does it deſerve the devout and inceſſant Conſideration of *human* Minds? Since by *them*, it is not only to be ſpeculated, as a bright and raviſhing Diſplay of the Divine Attributes; but to be applied to their fallen Nature, as a moſt benign Scheme of *recovering* Grace; as the ſure and only Method of obtaining Life and Immortality.

noblest Motives to Obedience. Nothing so powerful, to work a lively Faith, and a joyful Hope; as an attentive Consideration of our LORD's unutterable Merits. Nothing so sovereign, to antidote the pestilential Influence of the World, and deliver our Affections from a Slavery to ignoble Objects; as an habitual Remembrance of his extreme Agonies. The genuine, the ever-fruitful *Source* of all *Morality*, is the unfeigned Love of CHRIST; and the Cross, the CROSS, is the appointed * *Altar*, from which we may fetch a Coal †, to inkindle this sacred Fire.

BEHOLD, therefore, *the Man*; the matchless and stupendous Man; whose Practice was a Pattern of the most exalted Virtue, and his Person the Mirror of every Divine Perfection. Examine the Memoirs of his heavenly Temper, and exemplary Conversation. Contemplate that *Choir* of *Graces*, which were associated in his Mind, and shed the highest Lustre on all his Actions. Familiarize to thy Thoughts his instructive Discourses, and enter into the very Spirit of his refined Doctrines. That the Graces may be transfused into thy Breast, and the Doctrines transcribed in thy Life,—Follow Him to *Calvary*'s horrid

* *And I*, says our LORD, *if I be lifted up from the Earth*, and extended on the Cross, *will draw all Men unto me*: will give such a rich and transcendent Display of *my* Love, as shall constitute the most powerful and prevailing Attractive of *theirs*. *John* xii. 32.

† Alluding to *Isaiah* vi. 6.

horrid Eminence; to *Calvary*'s fatal Catastrophe. Where Innocence, Dignity, and Merit, were *made perfect through Sufferings:* each shining, with all possible Splendor, through the tragical Scene; somewhat like his own radiant Bow, then glowing with the greatest Beauty, when appearing on the darkest Cloud.—Be thy most constant Attention fixed, on that lovely and sorrowful Spectacle. Behold the spotless Victim, nailed to the Tree, and stabbed to the Heart. Hear Him pouring out Prayers, for his Murderers; before he poured out his Soul, for Transgressors. See the Wounds, that stream with Forgiveness, and *bleed Balm* for a distempered World. O! see the Justice of the Almighty, and his Goodness; his Mercy and his Vengeance; every *tremendous* and *gracious* Attribute manifested; manifested with inexpressible Glory, in that most *ignominious*, yet *grandest* of Transactions.

SINCE GOD is so inconceivably great, as these his marvellous Works declare;

Since the great Sov'reign sends Ten thousand Worlds,
To tell us, He resides above them all,
In Glory's unapproachable Recess *;

how

* For this *Quotation*, and several valuable *Hints*, I acknowledge myself indebted to those beautiful and sublime Poems, intituled *Night Thoughts*.—Of which I shall only say, That I receive fresh Pleasure, and richer Improvement, from every renewed Perusal. And, I think, I shall have Reason to bless the indulgent Bestower of all Wisdom, for those instructive and

how can We forbear haſtening, with *Moſes*, bowing Ourſelves to the Earth, and worſhipping?

O! what an honourable, as well as advantageous Employ, is Prayer!—*Advantageous.* By Prayer, We cultivate that improving Correſpondence with JEHOVAH, We carry on that gladdening Intercourſe with his SPIRIT, which muſt begin Here, in order to be completed in Eternity.—*Honourable.* By Prayer, we have Acceſs to that mighty Potentate; whoſe Sceptre ſways univerſal Nature, and whoſe rich Regalia fill the Skies with Luſtre. Prayer, places us in his Preſence-Chamber; while "the Blood of Sprinkling," procures us a gracious Audience.

SHALL I then *bluſh* to be found proſtrate, before the Throne of Grace? Shall I be *aſhamed* to have it known; that I offer up ſocial Supplications in the Family, or am conſcientious in obſerving my private Retirements? Rather, let me glory in this unſpeakable Privilege. Let me reckon it the *nobleſt* Poſture, to fall low on my Knees before his Footſtool; and the *higheſt* Honour, to enjoy Communion with his moſt exalted Majeſty.

and animating Compoſitions, even in my laſt Moments. Than which, nothing can more emphatically ſpeak their *ſuperior Excellence*, nor give a more ſolid Satisfaction to their worthy Author.—Happy ſhould I think myſelf, if theſe little Sketches of contemplative Devotion, might be honoured with the *moſt inferior* Degree of the ſame Succeſs. Might receive a Teſtimony, not from the Voice of Fame, but from the dying Lips of ſome edified Chriſtian.

jesty.—Incomparably more noble, than to sit, in Person, on the triumphal Chariot; or to stand, in Effigy, amidst the Temple of Worthies.

MOST inestimable, in such a View, is that Promise; which so often occurs in the prophetic Writings, and is the crowning Benefit of the new Covenant, *I will be thy God* *.—Will this supremely excellent, and Almighty Being, vouchsafe to be *my* Portion? To settle upon a poor Sinner, not the Heritage of a County; not the Possession of the whole Earth; but his *own* ever-blessed *Self?* May I then, through his free condescending Grace, and the unknown Merits of his Son, look upon all these infinitely noble Attributes as my Treasure? May I regard the *Wisdom*, which superintends such a Multitude of Worlds, as my Guide; the *Power*, which produced, and preserves them in Existence, as my Guard; the *Goodness*, which, by an endless Communication of Favours, renders them all so many Habitations of Happiness, as *my exceeding great Reward?*—What a Fund of Felicity, is included in such a Blessing! How often does the *Israelitish* Prince exult in the Assurance, that this unutterable and boundless Good is his own? Interested in this, he bids Defiance to every Evil, that can be dreaded; and rests in certain Expectation of every Blessing, that can be desired. The *LORD is my Light, and my Salvation; whom then shall I fear? The LORD*, with an Air

* Heb. viii. 10.

Air of Exultation, he repeats both his Affiance, and his Challenge, *is the Strength of my Life; of whom then shall I be afraid* *? Nothing so effectual, as this appropriating Faith, to inspire a Dignity of Mind, superior to transitory Trifles; or to create a Calmness of Temper, unalarmed by vulgar Fears, unappalled by Death itself.—*The LORD is my Shepherd*, says the same truly gallant and heroic Personage: *therefore shall I lack nothing* †. How is it possible, He should suffer Want, who has the All-sufficient Fulness for his Supply? So long as unerring Wisdom is capable of contriving the Means; so long as uncontroulable Power is able to execute them; such a One cannot fail of being safe and happy; whether he continue amidst the Vicissitudes of Time, or depart into the unchangeable Eternity.

HERE, let us stand a Moment, and humbly contemplate this great GOD, together with ourselves, in a relative View.—If we reflect on the Works of *material* Nature, their Number incomprehensible, and their Extent unmeasurable: each of them apart, so admirably framed; the Connexions of the Whole, so exquisitely regulated; and all derived, from one and the same glorious Agent—If we recollect the far more noble Accomplishments of elegant Taste, and discerning Judgment; of refined Affections, and exalted Sentiments; which are to be found, among the several Orders of *intelligent* Existence: and all of them

* Psal. xxvii. 1. † Psal. xxiii. 1.

them flowing, in rich Emanations, from the one ſole Fountain of intellectual Light—If we farther conſider this Author of material Beauty, and moral Excellency, as a *Guardian*, a *Governor*, and *Benefactor* to all his Creatures: ſupporting the whole Syſtem, and protecting each Individual, by an ever-watchful Providence; preſiding over the minuteſt Affairs, and cauſing all Events to terminate in the moſt extenſive Good; heaping, with unremitted Liberality, his Benefits upon every capable Object, and making the Circuit of the Univerſe a Seminary of Happineſs—Is it poſſible for the human Heart, under ſuch captivating Views, to be *indifferent* towards this moſt benign, moſt bountiful Original of Being and of Bliſs? Can any be ſo immerſed in Stupidity, as to ſay unto the Almighty—in the Language of an irreligious Temper, and licentious Life, to ſay? "Depart from Us; we im-"plore not thy Favour; nor deſire the Know-"ledge of thy Ways."—Wonder, O *Heavens!* be amazed, O *Earth!* and let the Inhabitants of *both* expreſs their Aſtoniſhment, at this unparalleled Complication of diſingenuous, ungrateful, deſtructive Perverſeneſs!

IF we conſider our *fallen* and *imperfect* State; frail in our Bodies; enfeebled in our Minds; in every Part of our Conſtitution, and in all the Occurrences of Life, "like a tottering Wall, or a "broken Hedge."—If we ſurvey our *indigent* and

infirm

infirm State; without Holineſs; without ſpiritual Strength; our Poſſeſſion of preſent Conveniencies, intirely dependent on GOD's ſovereign Pleaſure; yea, forfeited, juſtly forfeited, with every future Hope, by a thouſand aggravated Iniquities.—If we add the various *Diſaſters* of our Condition; agitated as we are by tumultuous Paſſions; oppreſſed with diſpiriting Fears; held in Suſpenſe by a Variety of perplexing * Cares: liable to Pains, and expoſed to Troubles; Troubles from every Quarter; Troubles of every Kind—Can we, amidſt ſo many Wants, under ſuch deplorable Infirmities, and ſubject to ſuch diſaſtrous Accidents,

* *Perplexing*—Thoſe who read the original Language of the New Teſtament, are ſufficiently appriſed, that ſuch is the *Significancy* of that benevolent Diſſuaſive, urged by our LORD, μη μεριμνατε, *Matt.* vi. 25.—I beg Leave, for the Sake of the *unlearned* Reader, to obſerve; That our Tranſlation, though for the moſt part faithful and excellent, has here miſrepreſented our Divine Maſter's Meaning. *Take no Thought* for your Food, for your Raiment, for your bodily Welfare, is not only not the true Senſe, but the very Reverſe of the Scriptural Doctrine. We are required to take a *prudent* and *moderate* Thought, for the Neceſſaries of Life. The Sluggard, who neglects this decent Precaution, is ſeverely reprimanded; is ſent to one of the meaneſt Animals, to bluſh for his Folly, and learn Diſcretion from her Conduct, *Prov.* vi. 6. Our Saviour's Precept, and the exact Senſe of his Expreſſion, is, Take no *anxious* Thought; indulge no *perplexing* Care. No ſuch Care, as may argue an unreaſonable *Diſtruſt* of Providence; or may *rend* and *tear* your Minds with diſtreſſing, with pernicious Solicitude.

dents—can we be unconcerned, whether GOD's omnipotent, irresistible, all-conducting Hand be *against* Us, or *for* Us? Imagination itself shudders at the Thought!—Can we rest satisfied, without a well-grounded Persuasion, that we are *reconciled* to this supreme LORD, and the Objects of his unchangeable Goodness!—If there be an abandoned Wretch, whose Apprehensions are so fatally blinded; who is so utterly lost to all Sense of his Duty, and of his Interest; let me bewail his *Misery*, while I abhor his Impiety. Bewail his Misery; though Popularity, with her choicest Laurels, adorn his Brow; though Affluence, with her richest Delicacies, load his Table; though half a Nation, or half a World, conspire to call him *happy*.

MAY I, by a believing Application, solace myself in this everlasting Source of Love, Perfection, and Joy! Grant me this Request, and I ask no more.—Only, that I may expect, not with a reluctant Anxiety, but with a ready Chearfulness, the Arrival of that important Hour; when this Veil of Flesh shall drop, and the Shadows of Mortality flee away. When I shall no longer complain of *obscure* Knowledge; *languid* Affections; and *imperfect* Fruition—but shall see the uncreated and immortal Majesty. *See* Him, not in this distant and unaffecting Method, of reasoning from his Works; but with

the moſt clear and direct Intuition of the Mind.—When I ſhall *love* Him, not with a cold and contracted Spirit; but with the moſt lively and inlarged Emotions of Gratitude.—When I ſhall inceſſantly *enjoy* the Light of his Countenance; and be united, inſeparably united to his all-glorious GODHEAD.—Take, ye Ambitious, unenvied and unoppoſed, take to yourſelves the Toys of State. May I be enabled to *rejoice* in this bleſſed Hope; and to *triumph* in that amiable, that adorable, that delightful Name, the LORD MY GOD! And I ſhall ſcarce beſtow a Thought, on the ſplendid Pageantry of the World, unleſs it be to *deſpiſe* it's empty Pomp, and to *pity* it's deluded Admirers.

ALL theſe Bodies, though immenſe in their Size, and almoſt infinite in their Multitude, are *obedient* to the Divine Command. The GOD of Wiſdom "telleth their Numbers," and is intimately acquainted with their various Properties. The GOD of Power "calleth them all by their "Names," and aſſigns them whatſoever Office He pleaſes.—He *marſhals* all the ſtarry Legions, with infinitely greater Eaſe, and nicer Order; than the moſt expert General, arranges his diſciplined Troops. He appoints their *Poſts*; he marks their *Route*; he fixes the Time for their *Return*. The Poſts, which he appoints, they occupy, without fail. In the Route, which he ſettles,

ſettles, they perſevere, without the leaſt Deviation. And to the Inſtant *, which he fixes for their Return, they are preciſely punctual.—He has given them a *Law*, which, through a long Revolution of Ages, ſhall not be broken; unleſs his ſovereign Will interpoſes, for it's *Repeal*. Then indeed, the Motion of the celeſtial Orbs is controuled; their Action remain ſuſpended; or their Influence receives a new Direction.—The *Sun*, at his Creation, iſſued forth with a Command, to travel perpetually through the Heavens. Since which, he has never neglected to perform the great Circuit; rejoicing as a Giant to "run his Race." But, when it is requiſite to accompliſh the Purpoſes of Divine Love, the Orders are countermanded; the flaming Courier remits his Career; *ſtands ſtill in Gibeon* †; and, for the Conveniency of the choſen People, holds back the falling Day.—The *Moon* was diſpatched

 with

* "The Planets, and all the innumerable Hoſt of "heavenly Bodies, perform their Courſes and Revo- "lutions, with ſo much Certainty and Exactneſs, as "never once to fail; but, for almoſt 6000 Years, "come conſtantly about to the ſame Period, in the "hundredth Part of a Minute." STACKHOUSE's *Hiſt. Bible.*

† This is ſpoken in Conformity to the Scripture Language, and according to the common Notion. With reſpect to the Power which effected the Alteration; it is much the ſame Thing, and alike miraculous; whether the Sun, or the Earth, be ſuppoſed to move.

with a Charge, never to intermit her revolving Courſe, till Day and Night come to an End. But when the Children of Providence, are to be favoured with an uncommon Continuance of Light, ſhe halts in her March; makes a ſolemn Pauſe *in the Valley of Ajalon* *; and delays to bring on her attendant Train of Shadows.—When the Enemies of the LORD are to be diſcomfited, the *Stars* are levied into the Service; the Stars are armed, and take the Field; *the Stars, in their Courſes, fought againſt Siſera* †.

So

* *Joſh.* x. 12, 13.—The Prophet *Habakkuk*, according to his lofty Manner, celebrates this Event; and points out, in very poetical Diction, the Deſign of ſo ſurpriſing a Miracle.—*The Sun and Moon ſtood ſtill in their Habitation: In the Light*, the long-continued and miraculous Light, *thy Arrows*, edged with Deſtruction, *walked* on their awful Errand; *in the clear Shining* of the Day, protracted for this very Purpoſe, *thy glittering Spear*, launched by thy People, but guided by thy Hand, ſprung to it's Prey. *Hab.* iii. 11.

† *Judg.* v. 20.—The ſcriptural Phraſe *fought againſt*, will, I hope, be a proper *Warrant* for every Expreſſion, I have uſed on this Occaſion.—The Paſſage is generally ſuppoſed to ſignify, that ſome very dreadful *Meteors* (which the Stars were thought to influence) ſuch as fierce Flaſhes of *Lightning*; impetuous Showers of *Rain*; and rapid Storms of *Hail*; were employed by the Almighty to terrify, annoy, and overthrow the Enemies of *Iſrael*. If ſo, there cannot be a more clear and lively Paraphraſe on the Text, than thoſe fine Lines of a *Jewiſh* Writer.—

His

So dutiful is material Nature! ſo obſequious, in *all* her *Forms*, to her Creator's Pleaſure!—The bellowing Thunders, liſten to his Voice; and the vollied Lightnings, obſerve the Direction of his Eye. The flying Storm, and impetuous Whirlwind, wear his Yoke. The raging Waves revere his Nod: they ſhake the Earth; they daſh the Skies; yet, never offer to paſs the Limits, which he has preſcribed.—Even the planetary Spheres; though vaſtly *larger*, than this wide-extended Earth; are, in his Hand, as *Clay* in the Hands of the Potter. Though, *ſwifter* than the Northern Blaſt, they ſweep the long Tracts of Æther; yet, are they guided by his Reins, and execute whatever He injoins.—All thoſe enormous Globes of *central* Fire, which beam through the boundleſs Azure; in compariſon of which, an Army of Planets, were like a Swarm of Summer Inſects; thoſe, even thoſe, are conformable to his Will, as the *melting Wax* to the impreſſed

His ſevere Wrath ſhall HE *ſharpen for a Sword; and* the World *ſhall* fight *with him* againſt *the Ungodly. Then, ſhall the* right-aiming Thunderbolts *go abroad; and from the* Clouds, *as from a* well-drawn Bow, *ſhall they fly to the Mark. And* Hail-ſtones, *full of Wrath, ſhall be caſt out of a Stone Bow; and the* Water *of the Sea ſhall rage againſt them; and the* Floods (as was the Caſe of the River *Kiſhon*) *ſhall cruelly drown them. Yea, a mighty* Wind *ſhall ſtand up againſt them; and, like a* Storm, *ſhall blow them away.* Wiſd. v. 20, 21, 22, 23.

Seal.—Since *all*, ALL is obedient, thoughout the whole Aſcent of Things, ſhall Man be the *only Rebel* againſt the Almighty Maker? Shall theſe unruly *Appetites*, reject his Government, and refuſe their Allegiance? Shall theſe headſtrong *Paſſions*, break looſe from Divine Reſtraint; and run wild, in exorbitant Sallies, after their own Imaginations?

O MY Soul, be ſtung with Remorſe, and overwhelmed with Confuſion, at the Thought! Is it not a righteous Thing, that the bleſſed GOD ſhould ſway the Sceptre, with the moſt abſolute Authority, over all the Creatures, which his Power has formed? Eſpecially over thoſe Creatures; whom his diſtinguiſhing Favour, has endued with the noble Principle of Reaſon, and made capable of a bliſsful Immortality? Sure, if all the Ranks of inanimate Exiſtence, conform to their Maker's Decree, by the *Neceſſity* of their Nature; this more excellent Race of Beings, ſhould pay their equal Homage, by the *willing* Compliance of their Affections *.—Come then, all

* This Argument, I acknowledge, is not abſolutely concluſive. But it is popular and ſtriking. Nor can I think myſelf obliged, in ſuch a Work; where *Fancy* bears a conſiderable Sway; to proceed always with the Caution and Exactneſs, of a *Diſputer* in the *Schools*. If there be ſome Appearance of Analogy, between the Fact and the Inference, it ſeems ſufficient for my Purpoſe;

all ye *Faculties* of my *Mind*; come, all ye *Powers* of my *Body*; give up yourſelves, without a Moment's Delay, without the leaſt Reſerve, to his Governance. Stand, like dutiful Servants, at his Footſtool; in an everlaſting Readineſs, to *do* whatſoever He requires; to *be* whatſoever He appoints. To further, with united Efforts, the Purpoſes of his Glory in this earthly Scene: or elſe to ſeparate, without Reluctance, at his Summons; the *one*, to ſleep in the ſilent Duſt; the *other*, to advance his Honour, in ſome remoter Colony of his Kingdom.—Thus, may I join with all the Works of the LORD, in all Places of his Dominion, to recognize his univerſal Su-

 premacy;

Purpoſe; though the Deduction ſhould not be neceſſary, nor the Proceſs ſtrictly ſyllogiſtical.—One of the *Apoſtolic Fathers*, has an affecting and ſublime Paragraph, which runs intirely in this Form: Ηλιος τε και σεληνη, ασερων τε χοροι, καλα την διαλαξην αυτα εν ομονοια, δικα πασης παρεκβασεως, εξελισσουσιν τας επιτελλομενας αυτοις οριομας. *The Sun, the Moon, and the ſtarry Choir, without the leaſt Deviation, and with the utmoſt Harmony, perform the Revolutions appointed them by the ſupreme Decree.* From which Remark, and abundance of other ſimilar Inſtances, obſervable in the Oeconomy of Nature; he exhorts Chriſtians, to a cordial *Unanimity* among themſelves, and a dutiful *Obedience* to GOD. Vid. *Clem. Roman.* 1 *Ep. ad Corinth. Sect.* 20.—See alſo a beautiful Ode in Dr. *Watts*'s Lyric Poems, intituled *The Compariſon and Complaint*, which turns upon this very Thought.

premacy; and proclaim Him Sovereign of Souls, as well as Ruler of Worlds.

AT my firſt coming abroad, all theſe Luminaries were *eclipſed*, by the overpowering Luſtre of the Sun. They were all placed in the very ſame Stations; and played the ſame ſprightly Beams; yet not one of them was ſeen. As the Daylight wore away, and the ſober Shades advanced; *Heſperus*, who leads the ſtarry Train, diſcloſed his radiant Forehead, and catched my Eye. While I ſtood gazing on his bright and beautiful Aſpect, ſeveral of his Attendants peeped through the blue Curtains. Scarce had I turned to obſerve theſe freſh Emanations of Splendor; but others dropt the Veil; others ſtole into View. When lo! faſter and more numerous, Multitudes ſprung from Obſcurity; they poured, in ſhining Troops, and in ſweet Confuſion, over all the empyrean Plain. Till the Firmament ſeemed, like one vaſt Conſtellation; and "a "Flood of Glory burſt from all the Skies."

IS not ſuch the *Riſe*, and ſuch the *Progreſs* of a true *Converſion*, in the prejudiced Infidel, or inattentive Sinner? During the Period of his vainer Years, a Thouſand intereſting Truths, lay utterly undiſcovered; a Thouſand momentous Concerns, were intirely diſregarded. But, when divine Grace diſſipates the deluſive Glitter, which dazled

dazled his Underſtanding, and beguiled his Affections; then, He begins to diſcern, dimly to diſcern, the Things which belong unto his Peace. Some Admonition of Scripture, darts Conviction into his Soul; as the Glimmering of a Star, pierces the Gloom of Night.—Then, perhaps, another awful, or chearing Text, impreſſes Terror, or diffuſes Comfort. A *Threatening* alarms his Fears, or a *Promiſe* awakens his Hopes. This, poſſibly, is ſucceeded by ſome *afflictive* Diſpenſation of Providence; and improved by ſome edifying and inſtructive Converſation. All which is eſtabliſhed, as to it's Continuance; and inlarged, as to it's Influence; by a diligent Study of the ſacred Word.—By this Means, new Truths continually pour their Evidence. Scenes of refined and exalted, but hitherto unknown Delight, addreſs Him with their Attractives. New Deſires take Wing; new Purſuits are ſet on Foot. A new Turn of Mind forms his Temper; a new Habit of Converſation regulates his Life. In a Word; *old Things are paſſed away*; *and all Things become new.* He, who was ſometime Darkneſs, is now Light, and Life, and Joy in the LORD.

THE more attentively I view the cryſtal Concave, the more fully I diſcern the Richneſs of it's Decorations. Abundance of minuter Lights, which lay concealed from a *ſuperficial* Notice, are viſible

viſible on a *cloſer* Examination. Eſpecially in thoſe Tracts of the Sky, which are called the *Galaxy*; and are diſtinguiſhable, by a ſort of milky Path. There, the Sars are crouded, rather than diſſeminated. The Region ſeems to be all on a Blaze, with their blended Rays.—Beſides this vaſt Profuſion, which in my preſent Situation the Eye diſcovers; was I to make my Survey, from any other Part of the Globe, lying nearer the Southern Pole; I ſhould behold a *new Choir* of ſtarry Bodies, which have never appeared within our Horizon.—Was I (which is ſtill more wonderful) either Here or There, to view the Firmament with the Virtuoſo's Glaſs; I ſhould find a prodigious Multitude of flaming Orbs, which, immerſed in Depths of Æther, eſcape the keeneſt unaſſiſted Sight *—Yet, in theſe various Situations; even with the Aid of the Teleſcopic Tube; I ſhould not be able to deſcry the Half, perhaps not a *Thouſandth* Part, of thoſe majeſtic Luminaries, which the vaſt expanſive Heavens

* Come forth, O Man, yon azure Round ſurvey,
And view thoſe Lamps, which yield eternal Day.
Bring forth thy Glaſſes: Clear thy wond'ring Eyes:
Millions beyond the former Millions riſe:
Look farther:—Millions more blaze from remoter Skies.

See an ingenious Poem, intituled The Univerſe.

vens contain *.—So, the more diligently I purſue my Search, into thoſe Oracles of eternal Truth, the *Scriptures*; I perceive a wider, a deeper, an ever increaſing Fund of ſpiritual Treaſures. I perceive the brighter Strokes of Wiſdom, and the richer Diſplays of Goodneſs; a more tranſcendent Excellency in the illuſtrious Meſſiah, and a more deplorable Vileneſs in fallen Man; a more immaculate Purity in GOD's Law, and more precious Privileges in his Goſpel. Yet, after a Courſe of Study, ever ſo aſſiduous; ever ſo prolonged; I ſhould have Reaſon to own myſelf, a mere *Babe* in heavenly Knowledge; or, at moſt, but a *puerile* Proficient, in the School of CHRIST.

AFTER all my moſt accurate Inſpection, thoſe ſtarry Orbs appear but as *glittering Points*. Even the Planets, though ſo much nearer our earthly Manſion, ſeem only like burning *Bullets*. If

* How noble, conſidered in this View, are the Celebrations of the Divine Majeſty, which frequently occur in the ſacred Writings! *It is the LORD that made the Heavens.* Pſal. xcvi. 5.—What a procigious Dignity, does ſuch a Senſe of Things give to that devout Aſcription of Praiſe! *Thou, even Thou, art LORD alone; Thou haſt made Heaven, the Heaven of Heavens, with all their Hoſt.* Nehem. ix 6.—Examined by this Rule, the beautiful Climax in our inſpired Hymn, is ſublime beyond Compare *Praiſe HIM, Sun and Moon: Praiſe HIM, all ye Stars of Light: Praiſe HIM, ye Heavens of Heavens.* Pſal. cxlviii. 3, 4.

If then, we have ſuch *imperfect Apprehenſions* of viſible and material Things; how much more ſcanty and inadequate, muſt be our Notions of inviſible and immortal Objects!—We behold the Stars. Though every one is incomparably bigger than the Globe we inhabit; yet they dwindle, upon our Survey, into the moſt diminutive Forms. Thus, we ſee by Faith the Glories of the bleſſed JESUS; the atoning Efficacy of his Death; the juſtifying Merit of his Righteouſneſs; and the Joys, which are reſerved for his Followers. But alas! even our moſt *exalted* Ideas, are vaſtly *below* the Truth. As much below the Truth; as the Report, which our Eyes make of thoſe celeſtial Edifices, is inferior to their real Grandeur.—Should we take in all the *magnifying* Aſſiſtances, which Art has contrived; thoſe luminous Bodies, would elude our Skill, and appear as *ſmall* as ever. Should an Inhabitant of Earth, travel towards the Cope of Heaven; and be carried forwards, in his aerial Journey, more than a Hundred and ſixty Millions of Miles*; even in that advanced Situation, thoſe

* This, incredible as it may ſeem, is not a mere Suppoſition, but a real Fact. For, about the Twenty-firſt of *December*, we are above 160,000,000 of Miles nearer the Northern Parts of the Sky, than we were at the Twenty-firſt of *June*. And yet, with regard to the Stars ſituate in that Quarter, we perceive no *Change* in their *Aſpect*, nor any *Augmentation* of their *Magnitude*.

thoſe *Oceans* of *Flame*, would look no larger, than *radiant Specks*.—In like manner, conceive ever ſo magnificently, of the Redeemer's Honours; and of the Bliſs, which he has purchaſed for his People; yet you will fall ſhort. Raiſe your Imagination *higher*; ſtretch your Invention *wider*; give them *all* the Scope, which a ſoaring and excurſive Fancy can take; ſtill, your Conceptions will be extremely *diſproportionate*, to their genuine Perfections.—Vaſt are the Bodies, which roll in the Expanſe of Heaven: vaſter far are thoſe Fields of Æther, through which they run their endleſs Round: but the Excellency of JESUS, and the Happineſs laid up for his Servants, are greater than *either*; than *both*; than *all*. An inſpired Writer calls the former, "The "unſearchable Riches of CHRIST;" and ſtiles the latter, "An exceeding great and eternal "Weight of Glory."

IF thoſe Stars, are ſo many inexhauſtible Magazines of Fire, and immenſe *Reſervoirs* of Light; there is no Reaſon to doubt, but they have ſome very *grand Uſes*, ſuitable to the Magnificence of their Nature. To ſpecify, or explain, the particular Purpoſes they anſwer; is altogether impoſſible, in our preſent State of Diſtance and Ignorance. This, however, we may clearly diſcern; they are diſpoſed in that very Manner, which is moſt *pleaſing* and moſt *ſerviceable* to Mankind.—

They are not placed at an *infinite Remove*, ſo as to lie beyond our Sight; neither are they brought *ſo near* our Abode, as to annoy us with their Beams. We ſee them ſhine on every Side. The deep Azure, which ſerves them as a Ground, heightens their Splendor. At the ſame Time, their Influence is gentle, and their Rays are deſtitute of Heat. So that we are ſurrounded with a Multitude of fiery Globes, which beautify and illuminate the Firmament, without any Riſque, either to the *Coolneſs* of our Night, or the *Quiet* of our Repoſe.—Who can ſufficiently admire that wondrous Benignity; which, on our Account, ſtrews the *Earth* with Bleſſings of every Kind; and vouchſafes to make the *very Heavens* ſubſervient to our Delight?

It is not ſolely to adorn the Roof of our Palace, with coſtly Gildings; that God commands the celeſtial Luminaries, to glitter through the Gloom. We alſo reap conſiderable Benefits, from their Miniſtry.—They *divide* our *Time*, and fix it's ſolemn Periods. They ſettle the *Order* of our *Works*; and are, according to the Deſtination mentioned in ſacred Writ, "for "Signs, and for Seaſons; for Days, and for "Years." The Returns of Heat and Cold alone, would have been too precarious a Rule. But theſe radiant Bodies; by the *Variation*, and alſo by the *Regularity* of their Motions; afford a Method of calculating, abſolutely certain, and

ſufficiently

ſufficiently obvious. By this, the *Farmer* is inſtructed, when to commit his Grain to the Furrows, and how to conduct the Operations of Huſbandry. By this, the *Sailor* knows when to proceed on his Voyage, with leaſt Peril; and how to carry on the Buſineſs of Navigation, with moſt Succeſs.

WHY ſhould not the Chriſtian, the Probationer for Eternity, learn from the ſame Monitors, to *number* — for nobler Purpoſes, to number his *Days*; and duly to tranſact the grand, grand Affairs of his everlaſting Salvation? Since GOD has appointed ſo many bright Meaſurers of our Time, to determine it's larger Periods, and to minute down it's ordinary Stages; ſure, this moſt ſtrongly inculcates it's *Value*, and ſhould powerfully prompt us to *improve* it.—Behold! the ſupreme Lord marks the Progreſs of our Life, in that moſt conſpicuous Kalendar above. Does not ſuch an Ordination tell us, and in the moſt emphatical Language; That our Life is given for *Uſe*, not for *Waſte?* That no Portion of it is delivered, but under a ſtrict Account; that all of it is entered, as it paſſes, in the Divine Regiſter; and, therefore, that the Stewards of ſuch a Talent, are to expect a future Reckoning?—Behold! the very Heavens are bidden to be the *Accomptants*, of our Years, and Months, and Days. O! may this induce us to manage them,

with

with a vigilant Frugality; to part with them as Misers with their *hoarded Treasure*, warily and circumspectly; and, if possible, as Merchants with their *rich Commodities*, not without an Equivalent, either in personal Improvement, or social Usefulness!

How *bright* the starry Diamonds shine! The Ambition of Eastern Monarchs could imagine no Distinction, more noble and sublime, than that of being likened to those beaming Orbs *.—They form Night's *richest Dress*; and sparkle upon her sable Robe, like Jewels of the finest Lustre. Like Jewels! I wrong their Character. The lucid Stone has no Brillancy; quenched is the Flame even of the golden Topaz; compared with those glowing Decorations of Heaven.—How widely are their radiant Honours *diffused!* No Nation so remote, but sees their Beauty, and rejoices in their Usefulness. They have been admired by all preceding Generations; and every rising Age, will gaze on their Charms, with renewed Delight.—How *animating*, then, is that Promise, made to the faithful Ministers of the Gospel! "They that turn many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars for ever and ever †." Is not this a most winning Encouragement, "to spend and be spent," in the Service of Souls? Methinks, the Stars beckon, as

* Numb. xxiv. 17. Dan. viii. 10. † Dan. xii. 3.

as they twinkle. Methinks, they ſhew me their Splendors, on purpoſe to inſpire me with *Alacrity*, in the Race ſet before me; on purpoſe to enliven my *Activity*, in the Work that is given me to do. —Yes; ye majeſtic Monitors, I underſtand your Meaning. If Honour has any Charms; if true Glory, the Glory which cometh from GOD, is any Attractive; you diſplay the moſt powerful Incitements, to exerciſe all Aſſiduity in my holy Vocation. I will, henceforth, obſerve your Intimation; and, when Zeal becomes *languid*, have recourſe to your heavenly Lamps. If ſo be, I may *rekindle* it's Ardor, at thoſe inextinguiſhable Fires.

OF the *Polar* Star, it is obſervable; that, while other Luminaries *alter* their Situation, this ſeems invariably *fixed* *. While other Luminaries, now, mount the Battlements of Heaven, and appear upon Duty; now, retire beneath the Horizon, and reſign to a freſh Set, the Watches of the Night; this never departs from it's Station. This, in every Seaſon, maintains an uniform Poſition; and is always to be found, in the ſame

* I ſpeak in Conformity to the *Appearance* of the Object. For, though this remarkable Star revolves round the Pole, it's Motion is ſo *ſlow*, and the Circle it deſcribes ſo *ſmall*; as render both the Revolution and Change of Situation, hardly perceivable.

Tract of the Northern Sky.—How often has this beamed bright Intelligence on the *Sailor*; and conducted the Keel, to it's desired Haven! In early Ages, those, who went down to the Sea in Ships, and occupied their Business in great Waters, had scarce any other sure Guide for their wandering Vessel. This therefore they viewed, with the most solicitous Attention. By this, they formed their Observations, and regulated their Voyage. When this was obscured by Clouds, or inveloped in Mists; the trembling Mariner was *bewildered*, on the watery Waste. His Thoughts fluctuated, as much as the floating Surge; and he knew not, *where* he was advanced, or *whither* he should steer. But, when this auspicious Star broke through the Gloom; it dissipated the Anxiety of his Mind, and cleared up his dubious Passage. He re-assumed, with Alacrity, the Management of the Helm; and was able to shape his Course, with some tolerable Degree of Satisfaction and Certainty.

SUCH, only much clearer in it's Light, and much surer in it's Direction, is the *Holy Word* of GOD, to those Myriads of intellectual Beings, who are bound for the eternal Shores. Who, embarked in a Vessel of feeble Flesh, are to pass the Waves of this tempestuous and perilous World. In all *Difficulties*, those sacred Pages shed an encouraging Ray; in all *Uncertainties*, they suggest the right Determination, and point out

out the proper Procedure. What is ſtill a more ineſtimable Advantage; they, like the Star which conducted the Eaſtern Sages, make plain the Way of Acceſs to a *Redeemer*. They diſplay his unſpeakable Merits; they diſcover the Method of being intereſted in his great Atonement; and lead the weary Soul, *toſſed* by Troubles, and *ſhattered* by Temptations, to that only Harbour of peaceful Repoſe.—Let us, therefore, attend to this *unerring* Directory, with the ſame Conſtancy of Regard, as the Sea-faring Man obſerves his Compaſs. Let us become as thoroughly acquainted with this ſacred Chart, as the Pilot is with every truſty Mark, that gives Notice of a lurking Rock; and with every open Road, that yields a ſafe Paſſage into the Port. Above all, let us commit ourſelves to this infallible Guidance, with the ſame implicit Reſignation; let us conform our Conduct to it's exalted Precepts, with the ſame ſedulous Care; as the Children of *Iſrael*, when ſojourning in the trackleſs Deſert, followed the Pillar of Fire, and the Motions of the miraculous Cloud.—So, will it introduce us, not into an earthly *Canaan*, flowing with Milk and Honey; but into an *immortal* Paradiſe, where is the Fulneſs of Joy, and where are Pleaſures for evermore. It will introduce us into thoſe happy, happy Regions, where *our Sun ſhall no more go down, nor our Moon withdraw itſelf; for the LORD ſhall be our*

everlasting Light, and the Days of our Mourning together with the Fatigues of our Pilgrimage, *shall be ended* *.

I PERCEIVE a great *Variety*, in the Size and Splendor of those Gems of Heaven. Some, are of the first Magnitude; others, of an inferior Order. Some *glow*, with intense Flames; others *glimmer*, with fainter Beams. Yet, *all* are beautiful; all have their peculiar Lustre, and distinct Use; all tend, in their different Degrees, to enamel the Cope of Heaven, and embroider the Robe of Night.—This Circumstance is remarked by an Author, whose Sentiments are a Source of Wisdom, and the very Standard of Truth. "One "Star, says the Apostle of the *Gentiles*, *differeth* "from another Star in Glory: *So* also is the "Resurrection of the Dead."

IN the World above, are various *Degrees* of Happiness, various Seats of Honour. Some will rise to more illustrious Distinctions, and richer Joys †. Some, like Vessels of ample Capacity, will admit more copious Accessions of Light and Excellence. Yet, there will be no Want, no Deficiency, in any; but a Fulness both of Divine

* Isa. lx. 20.

† 1 *Cor.* xv. 41, 42. The great Mr. *Mede prefers* the Sense here given; and the learned Dr. *Hammond admits* it, into his Paraphrase. Whose joint Authority, though far from excluding any *other*, yet is a sufficient Warrant for *this* Application of the Words.

vine Satisfactions, and perſonal Perfections. *Each* will enjoy *all* the Good; and be adorned with *all* the Glory; that his Heart can wiſh, or his Condition receive.—None will know what it is to envy. Not the leaſt Malevolence, nor the leaſt Selfiſhneſs, but everlaſting Friendſhip prevails, and a mutual Complacency in each other's Delight. Love, cordial Love, will give every particular Saint, a Participation of all the Fruitions *; which are diffuſed through the whole Aſſembly of the Bleſſed.—No one *eclipſes*, but each *reflects Light* upon his Brother. A ſweet Interchange of Rays ſubſiſts; all enlightened by the great Fountain, and all enlightening one another. By which reciprocal Communication of Pleaſure and Amity, each will be continually *receiving from*, each inceſſantly *adding to*, the general Felicity.

HAPPY, ſupremely happy they, who are admitted into the celeſtial Manſions. Better to be a Door-keeper in thoſe "Ivory Palaces †," than to fill the moſt gorgeous Throne on Earth. The very loweſt Place at GOD's Right-hand, is diſtinguiſhed Honour, and conſummate Bliſs. —O! that we may, in ſome meaſure, anticipate that beatific State, while we remain in our Baniſhment below! May we, *by rejoicing* in the ſuperior Proſperity of another, make it *our own!*

* *Tolle Invidiam, & tuum eſt quod habeo: Tolle Invidiam, & meum eſt quod habes.* AUGUSTINE.

† Pſal. xlv. 8.

And, provided the general Reſult is Harmony, be content, be pleaſed, with whatſoever Part is aſſigned to our Share, in the univerſal Choir of Affairs.

WHILE I am conſidering the heavenly Bodies, I muſt not intirely forget thoſe fundamental Laws of our modern Aſtronomy, *Projection* and *Attraction*. One of which is the all-combining Cement, the other is the ever-operative Spring of the mighty Frame.—In the Beginning, the all-creating FIAT impreſſed a proper Degree of Motion, on each of thoſe whirling Orbs. Which, if not controuled, would have carried them on, in ſtrait Lines, and to endleſs Lengths; till they were even loſt, in the Abyſs of Space. But the *gravitating* Property, being added to the *projectile* Force, determined their Courſes to a *circular* * Form; and obliged the reluctant

* I am aware, the planetary Orbits are not ſtrictly circular, but rather *elliptical*. However, as they are but a ſmall Remove from the perfectly round Figure; and partake of it incomparably more, than the Trajectories of the Comets; I chooſe to repreſent the Thing in this View. Eſpecially, becauſe the Notion of a Circle, is ſo much more intelligible to the Generality of Readers, than that of an Ellipſis; and becauſe I laid it down for a Rule, not to admit any ſuch *abſtruſe* Sentiment, or *difficult* Expreſſion, as ſhould demand a painful Attention, inſtead of raiſing an

reluctant Rovers, to perform their deſtined Rounds. — Were either of thoſe Cauſes to ſuſpend their Action, all the harmoniouſly moving Spheres would be diſconcerted. Would degenerate into ſluggiſh inactive Maſſes; and falling into the central Fire, be *burnt* to Aſhes. Or elſe, would exorbitate into wild Confuſion; and each, by the Rapidity of it's Whirl, be *diſſipated* into Atoms. But, the impulſive and attractive Energy, being moſt nicely attempered to each other; and, under the immediate Operation of the Almighty, exerting themſelves in perpetual Concert; the various Globes run their radiant Races, without the leaſt Interruption or the leaſt Deviation. So as to create the alternate Changes of *Day* and *Night*; and diſtribute the uſeful Viciſſitudes of *ſucceeding* Seaſons. So as to anſwer all the great Ends of a gracious Providence; and procure every comfortable Convenience, for univerſal Nature.

DOES not this Conſtitution of the material, very naturally lead the Thoughts, to thoſe grand Principles of the moral and devotional World,

an agreeable Idea. For which Reaſon, I have avoided *technical* Terms: have taken no Notice of *Jupiter*'s Satellites, or *Saturn*'s Ring; have not ſo much as mentioned the Names of the Planets, nor attempted to wade into any Depths of the Science. Leſt to thoſe who have no Opportunity of uſing the Teleſcope, or of acquainting themſelves with a Syſtem of Aſtronomy, I ſhould propound Riddles, rather than diſplay *entertaining* and *edifying* Truths.

Faith and *Love?*—These are often celebrated by the inspired Apostle, as a comprehensive Summary of the Gospel *. These inspirit the Breast, and regulate the Progress, of each private Christian. These unite the whole Congregation of the Faithful to GOD, and one another. To GOD, the great Centre, in the Bonds of Gratitude and Devotion; to one another, by a reciprocal Intercourse of brotherly Affections, and friendly Offices.—If you ask; Why is it impossible for the true Believer, to live at all Adventures? to *stagnate* in Sloth, or habitually to *deviate* from Duty?—We answer; It is owing to "his Faith, "working by Love †." He assuredly trusts, that CHRIST has sustained the Infamy, and endured the Torment, due to his Sins. He firmly relies on that Divine Propitiation, for the Pardon of all his Guilt; and humbly expects everlasting Salvation, as the Purchase of his Saviour's Merits. This produces such a Spirit of Gratitude, as refines his Inclinations, and animates his whole Behaviour. He cannot, he cannot run to Excess of Riot; because Love to his adorable Redeemer, like a strong, but silken *Curb*, sweetly restrains him. He cannot, he cannot lie lulled in a lethargic Indolence; because Love to the same infinite Benefactor, like a pungent, but

* Col. ii. 4. Philem. ver. 5. † Gal. v. 6.

but endearing *Spur*, pleasingly excites him.—In a Word; Faith supplies the powerful Impulse, while Love gives the determining Bias; and leads the willing Feet, through the whole Circle of GOD's Commandments. By the united Efficacy of these *heavenly Graces*, the Christian Conduct is preserved, in the Uniformity and Beauty of Holiness; as by the blended Power of those *Newtonian Principles*, the solar System revolves, in a steady and magnificent Regularity.

HOW admirable, how extensive, how diversified, is the Force of this single Principle, *Attraction* *!—This penetrates the very Essence of all Bodies, and diffuses itself to the remotest Limits of the mundane System.—By this, the Worlds impressed with Motion, hang *self-balanced* on their Centres †; and, though Orbs of immense Magnitude, require nothing, but this amazing Property for their Support.—To this we ascribe a Phænomenon, of a very different Kind, the *Pressure* of the Atmosphere. Which, though a yielding and expansive Fluid; yet constipated by an attractive Energy; surrounds the whole Globe, and incloses every Creature, as it were with a tight Bandage. An Expedient this, absolutely necessary to preserve the Texture of our Bodies; and

* I mean the Attraction both of *Gravitation* and *Cohesion*.

† *Ponderibus librata suis.*

and indeed, to maintain every Species of Animal Exiſtence.—Attraction! Urged by this wonderful Impetus, the *Rivers* circulate, copious and unintermitted, among all the Nations of the Earth: ſweeping with Rapidity down the Steeps, or ſoftly ebbing through the Plains. Impelled by the ſame myſterious Force, the *nutritious Juices* are detached from the Soil; and, aſcending the Trees, find their Way through Millions of the fineſt Meanders, in order to transfuſe vegetative Life into all the Branches.—This confines the *Ocean*, within proper Bounds. Though the Waves thereof roar; though they toſs themſelves, with all the Madneſs of indignant Rage; yet, checked by this potent, this inevitable Curb, they are unable to paſs even the ſlight Barrier of Sand. To this the Mountains owe that unſhaken Firmneſs, which laughs at the Shock of careering Winds; and bids the Tempeſt, with all it's mingled Horrors, impotently rave. —By virtue of this inviſible Mechaniſm; without the aid of Crane or Pulley, or any Inſtrument of human Device; many Thouſand Tons of Water are *raiſed*, every Moment, into the Regions of the Firmament. By this, they continue *ſuſpended* in thin Air, without any capacious Ciſtern, to contain their Subſtance; or any maſſy Pillars, to ſuſtain their Weight. By this ſame variouſly acting Power, they return to the Place

Place of their native Reſidence; *diſtilled* in gentle Falls of Dew, or *precipitated* in impetuous Showers of Rain. They *ſlide* into the Fields in fleecy Flights of Snow, or are *darted* upon the Houſes in clattering Storms of Hail.—This occaſions the ſtrong *Coheſion* of ſolid Bodies. Without which, our large Machines could exert themſelves with no Vigour; and the nicer Utenſils of Life, would elude our Expectations of Service. This affords a Foundation, for all thoſe delicate or noble mechanic Arts; which furniſh Mankind with numberleſs Conveniencies, both of Ornament and Delight.—In ſhort; this is the prodigious *Ballaſt*, which compoſes the Equilibrium, and conſtitutes the Stability of Things: this, the great *Chain*, which forms the Connexions of univerſal Nature; and the mighty *Engine*, which prompts, facilitates, and, in good meaſure, accompliſhes all her Operations.—What *complicated* Effects, from a *ſingle* Cauſe *! What Profuſion, amidſt Frugality! An unknown Profuſion of Benefits, with the utmoſt Frugality of Expence!

And what *is* this Attraction? Is it a Quality, in it's Exiſtence, inſeparable from Matter; and,

* See another remarkable Inſtance of this Kind, in the *Reflections on a Flower Garden*, pag. 171.—together with a fine Obſervation, quoted in the correſponding Note.

and, in it's Acting, independent on the DEITY! —Quite the reverse. It is the very *Finger* of GOD: the constant Impression of Divine Power: a Principle, neither innate in Matter, nor intelligible by Mortals.—Does it not, however, bear a considerable Analogy to the *Agency* of the HOLY GHOST, in the Christian Oeconomy? Are not the gracious Operations of the Blessed Spirit, thus *extensive*, thus *admirable*, thus *various?*—That Almighty Being transmits his Gifts, through every Age; and communicates his Graces, to every Adherent on the Redeemer. All, either of illustrious Memory, or of beneficial Tendency; in a Word, "all the Good that "is done upon Earth, He doth it himself." Strong in *his* Aid, and in the Power of *his* Might, the Saints of all Times, have trod Vice under their Feet; have triumphed over this abject World; and conversed in Heaven, while they dwelt on Earth. *Not I, but the Grace of GOD which was with me**, is the unanimous Acknowledgment of them All.—By the same kindly Succours, the whole Church is still enlightened, quickened, and governed. Through his benign Influences, the Scales of *Ignorance*, fall from the Understanding; the Leprosy of *evil* Concupiscence, is purged from the Will; and the

* 1 Cor. xv. 10.

the Fetters, the more than adamantine Fetters of *habitual* Iniquity, drop off from the Converſation. He breathes even upon dry Bones *, and they live: they are animated with Faith; they pant with ardent and heavenly Deſire; they exerciſe themſelves in all the Duties of Godlineſs. —His real, though ſecret, Inſpiration, diſſolves the Flint in the impenitent Breaſt; and binds up the Sorrows, of the broken Heart. Raiſes the Thoughts high, in the Elevations of holy Hope; yet lays them low, in the Humiliations of inward Abaſement. *Steels* the Soul with impenetrable Reſolution, and perſevering Fortitude; at the ſame time, *ſoftens* it into a Dove-like Meekneſs, and *melts* it in penitential Sorrow.

WHEN I contemplate thoſe ample and magnificent Structures, erected over all the æthereal Plains:—When I look upon them as ſo many ſplendid Repoſitories of Light, or fruitful Abodes of Life:—When I remember, that there may be other Orbs, vaſtly more remote, than thoſe which appear to our unaided Sight; Orbs, whoſe Effulgence, though travelling ever ſince the Creation, is not yet arrived upon our Coaſts †:—When

* See that beautiful Piece of ſacred and allegorical Imagery diſplayed, *Ezek.* xxxvii.

† If this Conjecture (which has no leſs a Perſon than the celebrated Mr. *Huygens* for it's Author) concerning

When I ſtretch my Thoughts to the innumerable Orders of Being, which inhabit all thoſe ſpacious Syſtems; from the *loftieſt Seraph*, to the loweſt Reptile; from the Armies of Angels, which ſurround the Throne of JEHOVAH; to the *puny Nations*, which tinge with Blue the Surface of the Plum *, or mantle the ſtanding Pool with Green:

cerning *unſeen Stare*, be true—If, to this Obſervation, be added, what is affirmed by our ſkilful Aſtronomers; that the Motion of the Rays of Light is ſo *ſurpriſingly ſwift*, as to paſs through ten Millions of Miles in a ſingle Minute—How vaſt! beyond Imagination vaſt and unmeaſurable, are the Spaces of the Univerſe!—While the Mind is diſtended with the *grand Idea*; or rather, while ſhe is diſpatching her ableſt Powers of piercing Judgment, and excurſive Fancy; and finds them all *drop ſhort*; all baffled by the amazing Subject: Permit me to apply that ſpirited Exclamation, and noble Remark—

— — Say, proud Arch,
Built with divine Ambition; in Diſdain
Of Limit built; built in the Taſte of Heav'n!
Vaſt Concave! Ample Dome! Waſt thou deſign'd
A *meet* Apartment for the DEITY?
Not ſo: That Thought alone thy State impairs:
Thy *Lofty* ſinks; and ſhallows thy *Profound*;
And ſtreightens thy *Diffuſive*.—

Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

* Ev'n the *blue Down* the purple Plum ſurrounds,
A *living World*, thy failing Sight confounds.

To

Green:—How various appear the Links, in this immenſe Chain! How vaſt the Gradations, in this univerſal Scale of Exiſtence! Yet all theſe, though ever ſo vaſt and various, are the *Work* of GOD's Hand, and are full of his Preſence.

HE rounded in his Palm thoſe dreadfully large Globes which are pendulous in the Vault of Heaven. He kindled thoſe aſtoniſhingly bright Fires, which fill the Firmament with a Flood of Glory. By Him they are ſuſpended in *fluid* Æther, and cannot be ſhaken: By Him they diſpenſe a *perpetual* Tide of Beams, and are never exhauſted.—He formed, with inexpreſſible Nicety, that delicately fine Collection of Tubes; that unknown Multiplicity of ſubtile Springs; which organize, and actuate, the Frame of the minuteſt Inſect. He bids the crimſon Current roll; the vital Movements play; and aſſociates a World of Wonders, even in an *animated Point* *.

—In

To HIM a peopled Habitation ſhews,
Where Millions taſte the Bounty GOD beſtows.

See a beautiful and inſtructive Poem, ſtiled
—DEITY.

* There are living Creatures, abundantly ſmaller than the Mite. Mr. *Bradley*, in his Treatiſe on Gardening, mentions an Inſect, which, after accurate Examination, he found to be a Thouſand times *leſs* than the *leaſt* viſible Grain of Sand. Yet ſuch an Inſect,

—In all these, is a signal Exhibition of creating Power; to all these, are extended, the special Regards of preserving Goodness. From hence, let me learn to rely on the Providence, and to revere the Presence, of the Supreme Majesty.

To *rely* on his *Providence.* — For, amidst that inconceivable Number and Variety of Beings, which swarm through the Regions of Creation, not one is overlooked, not one is neglected, by the great omnipotent Cause of all. However inconsiderable in it's Character, or diminutive in it's Size, it is still the Production of the universal Maker, and belongs to the Family of the Almighty Father. — What? Though inthroned Arch-

Insect, though quite imperceptible to the naked Eye, is an Elephant, is a Whale, compared with other Animalcules almost infinitely more minute, discovered by Mr. *Leuwenhoeck.*—If we consider the several Limbs, which compose such an organized Particle: The different Muscles, which actuate such a Set of Limbs: The Flow of Spirits, incomparably more attenuated, which put those Muscles in Motion: The various Fluids, which circulate: The different Secretions, which are performed: Together with the peculiar Minuteness of the Solids, before they arrive at their full Growth: Not to mention other *more astonishing* Modes of Diminution: — Sure, we shall have the utmost Reason to acknowledge, that the adored Maker is—MAXIMUS IN MINIMIS; *greatly glorious* even in his *smallest* Works.

Archangels, enjoy the *Smiles* of his *Countenance!* Yet, the low Inhabitants of Earth, the moſt deſpicable Worms of the Ground, are not excluded from his *providential Care*. Though the Manifeſtation of his Perfections, is vouchſafed to holy and intellectual Eſſences; his Ear is open, to the Cries of the young Raven. His Eye is attentive to the Wants, and to the Welfare, of the very meaneſt Births of Nature. —How much leſs then, are his own People diſregarded? Thoſe, for whom He has delivered his beloved Son to Death, and for whom He has prepared Habitations of eternal Joy. *They* diſregarded! No. THEY are "kept as the Apple "of an Eye." The very Hairs of their Head are all numbered. The fondeſt Mother may *forget* the Infant, that is "dandled upon her Knees," and ſucks at her Breaſt *; much ſooner than the Father of everlaſting Compaſſions can *diſcontinue*, or

* *Iſa.* xlix. 15. *Can a Woman forget her ſucking Child, that ſhe ſhould not have Compaſſion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget; yet will I not forget thee.*—How delicate and expreſſive are the Images, in this charming Scripture! How full of *Beauty*, if beheld in a critical, how rich with *Conſolation*, if conſidered in a believing, View!—Can a *Woman?* One of the ſofter Sex; whoſe Nature is moſt impreſſible, and whoſe Paſſions are remarkably tender—Can ſuch a one, not barely diſregard, but intirely *forget*; not ſuſpend her Care for a while,

or *remit*, his watchful Tenderneſs to his People —his Children—his Heirs.

LET

but utterly eraſe the very Memory—Of her *Child*; her own Child, not another's; a Child, that was formed in her *Womb*, and is a Part of herſelf?—Her *Son*; the more important, and therefore more deſirable Species; to whom it peculiarly belongs, to preſerve the Name, and build up the Family—Her *only* Son; for the Word is ſingular; and refers to a Caſe, where the Offspring, not being numerous, but centred in a ſingle Birth, muſt be productive of the fondeſt Endearment—Can ſhe diveſt herſelf of all Concern for ſuch a Child; not when he is grown up to Maturity, or gone abroad from her Houſe; but, while he continues in an infantile State, and muſt owe his whole Safety to her kind Attendance; while he lies in her Boſom, reſts on her Arm, and even *ſucks* at her Breaſt?—Eſpecially, if the poor Innocent be racked with Pain, or ſeized by ſome ſevere Affliction; and ſo become an Object of *Compaſſion*, as well as of Love. Can ſhe hear it's piercing Cries; can ſhe ſee it all reſtleſs, all helpleſs under it's Miſery; and feel no Emotions of parental Pity?—If *one* ſuch Monſter of Inhumanity might be found; could *all* (here the Prophet, to give his Compariſon the utmoſt Energy, changes the ſingular Number into the plural. It is not גַּם הִיא, or גַּם אֵחוֹת, but גַּם אֵלֶּה) could *all* Mothers be ſo degenerate? This, ſure, cannot be ſuſpected, need not be feared. Much leſs need the true Believer be apprehenſive of the Failure of my Kindneſs. An *univerſal* Extinction of thoſe *ſtrongeſt* Affections of Nature, is a more ſuppoſeable Caſe; than that I ſhould ever be unmindful of my People, or regardleſs of their Intereſts.

LET this teach me alſo a more lively Senſe of the *Divine Preſence*.—All the rolling Worlds above; all the living Atoms below; together with all the Beings that intervene, betwixt theſe wide Extremes; are Vouchers for an ever preſent Deity. "GOD has not left Himſelf without Witneſs." The Marks of his Footſteps are evident in every Place, and the Touches of his Finger diſtinguiſhable in every Creature. "*Thy* "*Name is ſo nigh*, O Thou all-ſupporting, all-informing LORD; *and that do thy wondrous* "*Works declare* *. Thy Goodneſs warms in the "Morning Sun, and refreſhes in the Evening "Breeze. Thy Glory ſhines in the Lamps of "Midnight, and ſmiles in the Bloſſoms of Spring. "We ſee a *Trace* of thy imcomprehenſible Grandeur, in the *boundleſs* Extent of Things; and "a *Sketch* of thy exquiſite Skill, in thoſe almoſt "*evaneſcent* Sparks of Life, the Inſect Race."—How ſtupid is this Heart of mine, that, amidſt ſuch a Multitude of Remembrancers, thronging on every Side, I ſhould forget Thee a ſingle Moment! Grant me, Thou great I AM; Thou Source, and Support, of univerſal Exiſtence—O! grant me an enlightened Eye, to *diſcern* Thee in every Object; and a devout Heart, to *adore* Thee on every Occaſion. Inſtead of living without GOD in the World; may I be ever with Him, and ſee all Things full of Him!

* Pſal. lxxv. 2.

— — The glitt'ring Stars,
By the deep Ear of Meditation heard,
Still in their Midnight Watches ſing of HIM
He nods a Calm. The Tempeſt blows his Wrath.
The Thunder is his Voice; and the red Flaſh
His ſpeedy Sword of Juſtice. At his Touch
The Mountains flame. He ſhakes the ſolid Earth,
And rocks the Nations. Nor in theſe alone,
In ev'ry common Inſtance *GOD is ſeen.*

THOMSON's Spring.

IF the beautiful Spangles, which a clear Night pours on the Beholder's Eye; if thoſe other Fires, which beam in remoter Skies; and are diſcoverable only by, that Revelation to the Sight, the Teleſcope: if all thoſe *bright Millions*, are ſo many Fountains of Day; enriched with native and independent Luſtre; illuminating Planets, and enlivening Syſtems of their own *: What Pomp, how majeſtic and ſplendid, is diſcloſed in the Midnight Scene! What *Riches* are diſſeminated, through all thoſe numberleſs Provinces of the great

* Conſult with Reaſon, Reaſon will reply,
Each *lucid Point*, which glows in yonder Sky,
Informs a *Syſtem* in the boundleſs Space,
And fills, with Glory, it's appointed Place:
With Beams unborrow'd, brightens other Skies;
And Worlds, to Thee unknown, with Heat and
Life ſupplies. *The Univerſe.*

great JEHOVAH's Empire! — Grandeur beyond Expreſſion!—Yet, there is not the meaneſt Slave, but carries *greater* Wealth in his own Boſom, poſſeſſes *ſuperior* Dignity in his own Perſon. The *Soul*, that informs his Clay;—the Soul, that teaches him to think, and enables him to chooſe; that qualifies him to reliſh rational Pleaſure, and to breathe ſublime Deſire *;—the Soul, that is endowed with ſuch noble Faculties, and, above all, is diſtinguiſhed with the *dreadful*, the *glorious* Capacity, of being pained, or bleſſed, for ever—this Soul ſurpaſſes in Worth, whatever the Eye can ſee; whatever, of material, the Fancy can imagine. Before one ſuch intellectual Being, all the Treaſure, and all the Magnificence of unintelligent Creation, becomes poor and contemptible †. For this Soul, Omnipo-

 tence

* In *this* reſpect, as veſted with ſuch Capacities, the Soul even of fallen Men, has an unqueſtionable Greatneſs and Dignity; is *majeſtic, tho' in Ruin.*

† I beg Leave to tranſcribe a pertinent Paſſage, from that celebrated Maſter of Reaſon, and univerſal Literature, Dr. *Bentley*; whom no one can be tempted to ſuſpect, either tinctured with Enthuſiaſm, or warped to Bigotry.—" If we conſider, ſays he, the " Dignity of an intelligent Being, and put that in the " Scale againſt brute and inaminate Matter, we may " affirm, without overvaluing human Nature, that " the Soul of one virtuous and religious Man is of " greater Worth and Excellency, than the Sun, and " his Planets, and all the Stars in the World."

See his Sermons at *Boyle*'s Lect. N° 8.

tence itſelf has waked, and worked, through every Age. To *convince* this Soul, the fundamental Laws of Nature have been controuled; and the moſt amazing Miracles, have alarmed all the Ends of the Earth. To *inſtruct* this Soul, the Wiſdom of Heaven has been transfuſed into the ſacred Page; and Miſſionaries have been ſent from the Great King, who reſides in Light unapproachable. To *ſanctify* this Soul, the Almighty Comforter takes the Wings of a Dove; and, with a ſweet transforming Influence, broods on the human Heart. And O! to *redeem* this Soul from Guilt; to reſcue it from Hell; the Heaven of Heavens was bowed, and GOD himſelf came down to dwell in Duſt.

LET me pauſe, a while, upon this important Subject.—What are the Schemes, which engage the Attention of eminent Stateſmen, and mighty Monarchs, compared with the grand Intereſts of an immortal Soul? The Support of Commerce, and the Succeſs of Armies, though extremely weighty Affairs; yet, if laid in the Balance againſt the Salvation of a Soul, are lighter than the downy Feather, poiſed againſt Talents of Gold. To ſave a Navy from *Shipwreck*, or a Kingdom from *Slavery*, are Deliverances of the moſt momentous Nature, which the Tranſactions of Mortality can admit. But O! how they ſhrink into an inconſiderable Trifle, (if their

Aſpect

Aſpect upon Immortality forgot) they are ſet in Competition with the Delivery of a ſingle Soul, from the Anguiſh and Horrors of a *diſtreſſed Eternity* *!

Is ſuch the Importance of the Soul! What Vigilance then can be *too much*; or rather, what holy Solicitude can be *ſufficient*; for the Overſeers of the Saviour's Flock, and the Guardians of this great, this venerable, this invaluable Charge?—Since, ſuch is the Importance of the Soul; wilt thou not, O Man, be watchful for the Preſervation of thy own? Shall every caſual Incident, awaken thy Concern; every tranſitory Toy, command thy Regard? And ſhall the Welfare of thy Soul, a Work of continual Occurrence; a Work of endleſs Conſequence; ſue, in vain, for thy ſerious Care?—Thy Soul, thy Soul, is thy All. If this be *ſecured*, thou art greatly rich, and wilt be unſpeakably happy. If this be *loſt*, a whole World acquired, will leave thee in Poverty; and all it's Delights enjoyed, will abandon thee to Miſery.

I HAVE often been charmed, and awed at the Sight of the nocturnal Heavens; even before I

* Not all yon Luminaries quench'd at once
Were half ſo ſad, as one benighted Mind,
Which gropes for Happineſs, and meets Deſpair.
Night-Thoughts, N° IX.

knew how to conſider them, in their proper Circumſtances of Majeſty and Beauty. *Something* like *Magic*, has ſtruck my Mind, on a tranſient and unthinking Survey of the æthereal Vault; tinged throughout with the pureſt Azure, and decorated with innumerable ſtarry Lamps. I have felt, I know not what, powerful and aggrandizing Impulſe; which ſeemed to ſnatch me from the low Intanglements of Vanity, and prompted an ardent Sigh for *ſublimer Objects*. Methought, I heard, even from the ſilent Spheres, a commanding Call, to ſpurn the abject Earth, and pant after unſeen Delights.—Henceforward, I hope to imbibe more copiouſly, this *moral Emanation* of the Skies; when, in ſome ſuch Manner as the preceding, they are rationally ſeen, and the Sight is duly improved. The Stars, I truſt, will *teach* as well as *ſhine*; and help to diſpel, both Nature's Gloom, and my intellectual Darkneſs. To ſome People, they diſcharge no better a Service, than that of holding a Flambeau to their Feet, and ſoftening the Horrors of their Night. To me and my Friends, may they act as Miniſters of a ſuperior Order; as Counſellors of Wiſdom, and Guides to Happineſs! Nor will they fail to execute this nobler Office, if they gently light our Way, into the Knowledge of their adored Maker; if they point out, with their ſilver Rays, our Path to his beatific Preſence.

I GAZE, I ponder. I ponder, I gaze; and think ineffable Things.—I roll an Eye of Awe and Admiration. Again and again I repeat my raviſhed Views; and can never ſatiate either my Curioſity, or my Inquiry. I ſpring my Thoughts into this immenſe Field, till even Fancy tires upon her Wing. I find Wonders, *ever new*; Wonders, more and *more amazing*.—Yet, after all my preſent Inquiries, what a mere *Nothing* do I know; by all my future Searches, how *little* ſhall I be able to learn; of thoſe vaſtly diſtant Suns, and their circling Retinue of Worlds! Could I pry with *Newton*'s piercing Sagacity, or launch into his extenſive Surveys: even then, my Apprehenſions would be little better, than thoſe dim and ſcanty Images, which the *Mole*, juſt emerged from her Cavern, receives on her feeble Optic.—This, ſure, ſhould repreſs all impatient or immoderate Ardor to pry into the Secrets of the ſtarry Structures; and make me more particularly careful, to cultivate my Heart. To fathom the Depths of the Divine Eſſence; or to ſcan univerſal Nature, with a critical Exactneſs; is an Attempt, which ſets the *acuteſt Philoſopher*, very nearly on a Level with *the Idiot*. Since it is almoſt, if not altogether, as impracticable by the former, as by the latter.

BE it, then, my chief Study, not to purſue, what is abſolutely unattainable; but rather to ſeek, what is obvious to find; eaſy to be acquired;

quired; and of ineſtimable Advantage, when poſſeſſed. O! let me ſeek *that Charity*, which edifieth *; *that Faith*; which purifieth. Love, humble Love, not conceited Science, keeps the Door of Heaven. Faith, a child-like Faith in JESUS; not the haughty ſelf-ſufficient Spirit, which ſcorns to be ignorant of any Thing; preſents a Key † to thoſe Abodes of Bliſs.—This preſent State, is the Scene deſtined to the *Exerciſe of Devotion*; the inviſible World, is the Place appointed for the *Enjoyment* of *Knowledge*. There, the Dawn of our infantile Minds, will be advanced to the Maturity of perfect Day; or rather,

* 1 *Cor.* viii. 1. I need not inform my Reader, that in this Text; in that admirable Chapter, 1 *Cor.* xiii. and in various other Paſſages of Scripture; the Word *Charity*, ſhould by no means be confined to the particular Act of *Alms-giving*, or external Beneficence. It is of a much more exalted and extenſive Nature. It ſignifies that divinely precious Grace, which warms the Soul with *ſupreme Love* to GOD, and inlarges it with *diſintereſted Affection* for Men. Which renders it the reigning Care of the Life, and chief Delight of the Heart, to promote the Happineſs of the One, and the Glory of the Other.—*This, this*, is that Charity of which ſo many excellent Things are every where ſpoken. Which can never be too highly extolled, or too earneſtly coveted, ſince it is the Image of GOD, and the very Spirit of Heaven.

† The Righteouſneſs of CHRIST. This is what MILTON beautifully ſtiles;

——— *The golden Key,*
That opes the Palace of Eternity.

ther, there our midnight Shades, will be brightened into all the Luſtre of Noon. There, the Souls which come from the School of Faith and bring with them the Principles of Love, will dwell in Light itſelf; will be obſcured with no Darkneſs at all; will know, even as they are known *.—Such an Acquaintance, therefore, do I deſire to form, and to carry on ſuch a Correſpondence, with the heavenly Bodies; as may ſhed a benign Influence on the Seeds of Grace, implanted in my Breaſt. Let the exalted Tracts of the Firmament, ſink my Soul into *deep Humiliation*. Let thoſe eternal Fires, kindle in my Heart an *adoring Gratitude*, to their Almighty Sovereign. Let yonder ponderous and enormous Globes, which reſt on his ſupporting Arm; teach me an *unſhaken Affiance*, in their incarnate Maker. Then ſhall I be—if not wiſe as the Aſtronomical Adept, yet WISE UNTO SALVATION.

HAVING now walked and worſhipped, in this *univerſal Temple*, that is arched with Skies; emblazed with Stars; and extended even to Immenſity—Having caſt an Eye, like the inraptured Patriarch †; an Eye of *Reaſon* and *Devotion*, through the magnificent Scene. With the former, having diſcovered an Infinitude of Worlds; and with the latter, having met the Deity in every View—Having beheld, as *Moſes* in the flaming

* 1 Cor. xiii. 12. † Gen. xv. 5.

flaming Buſh, a *Glimpſe* of JEHOVAH's Excellencies! reflected from the ſeveral Planets, and ſtreaming from Myriads of celeſtial Luminaries—Having read various Leſſons, in that ſtupendous *Book* of *Wiſdom**, where unmeaſurable Sheets of Azure compoſe the Page; and Orbs of Radiance write, in everlaſting Characters, a *Comment* on our Creed—What remains, but that I cloſe the midnight Solemnity, as our LORD concluded his grand Sacramental Inſtitution with a *Song* of *Praiſe?*—And behold a Hymn, ſuited to the ſublime Occaſion; indited by † Inſpiration itſelf; transferred into our Language, by ‡ one of the happieſt Efforts of human Ingenuity.

The ſpacious Firmament on high,
With all the blue æthereal Sky,
And ſpang'led Heav'ns, a ſhining Frame,
Their great Original proclaim:
Th' unwearied Sun from Day to Day,
Does his Creator's Pow'r diſplay;
And publiſhes, to ev'ry Land,
The Work of an Almighty Hand.

Soon

* — — For Heaven
Is as the *Book of* GOD before thee ſet,
Wherein to read his wondrous Works.—MILT.

† Pſal. xix.

‡ ADDISON, *Spect.* Vol. VI. N° 465.

Soon as the Ev'ning Shades prevail,
The Moon takes up the wondrous Tale;
And nightly, to the liſt'ning Earth,
Repeats the Story of her Birth:
While all the Stars, that round her burn,
And all the Planets in their Turn,
Confirm the Tidings as they roll,
And ſpread the Truth from Pole to Pole.

What though, in ſolemn Silence, all
Move round the dark terreſtrial Ball?
What though, nor real Voice nor Sound
Amid their radiant Orbs be found?
In Reaſon's Ear they all rejoice,
And utter forth a glorious Voice,
For ever ſinging, as they ſhine,
The Hand that made Us, is divine.

A

WINTER-PIECE.

Storms and Tempeſts may calm *the Soul*
—Snow and Ice be taught to warm *the*
Heart, and praiſe the Creator.

Anonym. Lett. to the Author. See p. 260.

THE

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A

WINTER-PIECE.

'TIS true, in the delightful Seaſons, HIS Tenderneſs and HIS Love, are moſt eminently diſplayed.—In the *vernal* Months, all is Beauty to the Eye, and Muſic to the Ear. The Clouds drop Fatneſs; the Air ſoftens into Balm; and Flowers, in rich Abundance, ſpring where-ever we tread, bloom where-ever we look.—Amidſt the burning Heats of *Summer*, HE expands the Leaves, and thickens the Shades. He ſpreads the cooling Arbor, to receive Us; and awakes the gentle Breeze, to fan Us. The Moſs ſwells into a Couch, for the Repoſe of our Bodies; while the Rivulet ſoftly rolls, and ſweetly murmurs, to ſooth our Imagination.—In *Autumn*, HIS Bounty covers the Fields, with a Profuſion of nutrimental Treaſure; and bends the Boughs, with Loads of delicious Fruit. He furniſhes his hoſpitable Board with

preſent Plenty, and prepares a copious Magazine for future Wants.—But, is it *only* in theſe ſmiling Periods of the Year, that GOD, the all-gracious GOD, is ſeen? Has *Winter*, ſtern Winter, no Tokens of his Preſence? Yes: All Things are eloquent of his Praiſe. "His Way is in the "Whirlwind." Storms and Tempeſts fulfil his Word, and extol his Power. Even piercing Froſts, bear Witneſs to his Goodneſs; while they bid the ſhivering Nations tremble at his Wrath.—Be Winter then, for a while, our Theme *. Perhaps, thoſe *barren* Scenes, may be *fruitful* of intellectual Improvement. Perhaps, that rigorous Cold, which binds the Earth in icy Chains; may ſerve to inlarge our Hearts, and warm them with holy Love.

SEE! how the *Day* is *ſhortened!*—The Sun, detained in fairer Climes, or engaged in more agreeable

* A Sketch of this Nature, I muſt acknowledge, is quite different from the Subject of the Book; and I cannot but declare, was as far diſtant from the Thoughts of the Author. But, the Deſire of *ſeveral* Acquaintance, together with an Intimation of it's Uſefulneſs, by a very *polite Letter* from an *unknown* Hand (which has *undeſignedly* furniſhed me with the beſt Motto, I could recollect), prevailed with me to add a few deſcriptive Touches, and improving Hints, on what is ſo often experienced in theſe Northern Regions. I hope, the Attempt I have made to oblige theſe Gentlemen, will obtain the *Approbation*, or at leaſt, the *Excuſe*, of my other Readers.

agreeable Services, riſes, like an unwilling Viſitant, with tardy and reluctant Steps. He walks, with a ſhy Indifference, along the Edges of the Southern Sky; caſting an oblique Glance, he juſt looks upon our dejected World; and ſcarcely ſcatters Light, through the thick Air. Dim is his Appearance, languid are his Gleams, while He continues. Or, if He chance to wear a brighter Aſpect, and a cloudleſs Brow; yet, like the Young and Gay in the Houſe of Mourning, He ſeems uneaſy, till He is gone; is in Haſte to depart. —And let Him depart. Why ſhould we wiſh for his longer Stay; ſince he can ſhew us nothing but the Creation in Diſtreſs? The flowery Families lie dead, and the tuneful Tribes are ſtruck dumb. The Trees, ſtript of their Verdure, and laſhed by Storms, ſpread their naked Arms to the enraged and relentleſs Heavens. Fragrance no longer floats in the Air; but chilling Damps hover, or cutting Gales blow. Nature, diveſted of all her beautiful Robes, ſits, like a forlorn diſconſolate Widow, in her Weeds. While Winds, in doleful Accents, howl; and Rains, in repeated Showers, weep.

We regret not, therefore, the ſpeedy Departure of the Day. When the Room is hung with *funeral Black*, and diſmal Objects are all around; who would deſire to have the *glimmering Taper* kept alive? Which can only diſcover Spectacles of Sorrow; can only make the Hor-

ror visible.—And, since this mortal Life is little better than a continual Conflict with Sin, or an unremitted Struggle with Misery; is it not a *gracious* Ordination, which has reduced our Age to a *Span?* Fourscore Years of Trial, for the Virtuous, are sufficiently long; and more than such a Term, allowed to the Wicked, would render them beyond all Measure vile. Our Way to the Kingdom of Heaven, lies through Tribulations. Shall we then *accuse*, shall we not rather *bless*, the Providence, which has made the Passage short? Soon, soon we cross the Vale of Tears; and then arrive on the happy Hills, where Light for ever shines, where Joy for ever smiles.

SOMETIMES, the Day is rendered shorter still; is almost blotted out from the Year*. The Vapours gather; they thicken into an impenetrable Gloom; and obscure the Face of the Sky. At length, the *Rains* descend. The Sluices of the Firmament are opened; and the low-hung Clouds pour their congregated Stores. Copious and unintermitted, still they pour; and still are unexhausted. The Waters drop incessantly from the Eves, and rush in rapid Streams from the Spouts. They roar along the chanelled Pavements, and stand in foul Shallows amidst the Village-Streets. Now, if the inattentive Eye,

* Involvere Diem Nimbi & *Nox humida* Cœlum
Abstulit— VIRG.

Eye, or negligent Hand, has left the Roof but ſcantily covered; the inſinuating Element finds it's Way into every Flaw, and oozing through the Cieling, at once upbraids and chaſtiſes the careleſs Inhabitant. The Ploughman, ſoaked to the Skin, leaves his half-tilled Acre. The poor Poultry, dripping with Wet, croud into Shelter. The Tenants of the Bough fold up their Wings, afraid to launch into the ſtreaming Air. The Beaſts, joyleſs and diſpirited, ruminate under their Sheds. The Roads ſwim, and the Brooks ſwell.—The *River*, amidſt all this watry Ferment, long contained itſelf within it's appointed Bounds. But, ſwollen by innumerable Currents; and rouſed, at laſt, into uncontroulable Rage; burſts over it's Banks; ſhoots into the Plain; bears down all Oppoſition; ſpreads itſelf far and wide; and buries the Meadow under a brown, ſluggiſh, ſoaking *Deluge*.

How happy for Man, that this Inundation comes, when there are no flowery Crops in the Valley, to be overwhelmed; no Fields ſtanding thick with Corn, to be laid waſte! At *ſuch* a Juncture, it would have been *Ruin* to the Huſbandman and his Family: but, *thus* timed, it yields *Manure* for his Ground, and promiſes Him *Riches* in Reverſion.—How often, and how long, has the Divine Majeſty bore with the moſt injurious Affronts from Sinners! His Goodneſs triumphed over their Perverſeneſs, and

graciouſly refuſed to be exaſperated. But, O preſumptuous Creatures, multiply no longer your Provocations. Urge not, by repeated Iniquities, the Almighty Arm to ſtrike; leſt his Long-ſuffering ceaſe, and his fierce Anger break forth; break forth, like a *Flood of Waters* *, and ſweep you away, into irrecoverable and everlaſting Perdition.

How mighty! how majeſtic! and O! how myſterious are thy Works, Thou GOD of Heaven, and LORD of Nature! When the Air is calm, where ſleep the *ſtormy Winds?* In what Chambers are they repoſed, or in what Dungeons confined! Till Thou art pleaſed to awaken their Rage, and throw open their Priſon-Doors. Then, with irreſiſtible Impetuoſity they fly forth, ſcattering Dread, and menacing Deſtruction.

THE Atmoſphere is hurled into the moſt tumultuous Confuſion. The aereal Torrent burſts it's Ways over Mountains, Seas, and Continents. All Things feel the dreadful Shock. All Things tremble before the furious Blaſt. The *Foreſt*, vexed and tore, groans under the Scourge. Her ſturdy Sons are ſtrained to the very Root, and almoſt ſweep the Soil, they were wont to ſhade. The ſtubborn Oak, that diſdains to bend, is daſhed headlong to the Ground; and with

* Hoſ. v. 10.

with ſhattered Arms, with proſtrate Trunk, blocks the Road.—While the flexile Reed, that ſprings up in the Marſh, yielding to the Guſt (as the *meek* and pliant Temper, to Injuries; or the *reſigned* and patient Spirit, to Misfortunes); eludes the Force of the Storm, and ſurvives amidſt the wide-ſpread Havock.

For a Moment, the turbulent and outrageous Sky, ſeems to be aſſwaged: but, it intermits it's Wrath, only to increaſe it's Strength. Soon, the ſounding Squadrons of the Air return to the Attack, and renew their Ravages with redoubled Fury. The ſtately Dome rocks, amidſt the wheeling Clouds. The impregnable Tower totters on it's Baſis; and threatens to overwhelm, whom it was intended to protect. The ragged Rock is rent in Pieces *; and even the Hills, the perpetual Hills, on their deep Foundations, are ſcarcely ſecure.—Where, now, is the Place of Safety? When the *City* reels, and Houſes become Heaps! Sleep affrighted flies. Diverſion is turned into Horror. All is Uproar in the Element; all is Conſternation among Mortals; and nothing, but one wide Scene of rueful Devaſtation, through the Land.—Yet, this is only an *inferior* Miniſter of divine Diſpleaſure. The Executioner of *milder* Indignation. How then,—O! *how will the lofty Looks of Man be humbled, and*

* 1 Kings xix. 11.

and the Haughtineſs of Man be bowed down *; when the LORD GOD Omnipotent ſhall *meditate* Terror—when He ſhall ſet *all* his Terrors in Array—when He ariſes, to judge the Nations, and to *ſhake terribly* the Earth!

THE *Ocean* ſwells with tremendous Commotions. The ponderous Waves are heaved from their capacious Bed, and almoſt lay bare the unfathomable Deep. Flung into the moſt rapid Agitation, they ſweep over the Rocks; they laſh the lofty Cliffs; and toſs themſelves into the Clouds. Navies are rent from their Anchors; and, with all their enormous Load, are whirled, ſwift as the Arrow, wild as the Winds, along the vaſt Abyſs.—Now, they climb the rolling Mountain; they plow the frightful Ridge;

* ——— *Mortalia Corda*
Per Gentes humilis ſtravit Pavor.—

One would almoſt imagine, that *Virgil* had read *Iſaiah*, and borrowed his Ideas from Chap. ii. Ver. 11. The *humilis* and *ſtravit* of the one, ſo exactly correſpond with the—*humbled*—*bowed down*—of the other. But, in one Circumſtance, the Prophet is very much ſuperior to the Poet. The Prophet, by giving a ſtriking *Contraſt* to his Sentiments, repreſents them with incomparably greater Energy. He ſays not, *Men* in the groſs, or the *human Heart* in general: but Men of the moſt *elated* Looks; Hearts big with the moſt *arrogant* Imaginations. Even *theſe* ſhall ſtoop from their ſupercilious Heights; even *theſe* ſhall grovel in the Duſt of Abaſement, and ſhudder with all the Extremes of an abject Puſillanimity.

Ridge; and ſeem to ſkim the Skies. Anon, they plunge into the opening Gulf; they loſe the Sight of Day; and are loſt themſelves to every Eye. How vain is the Pilot's Art! How impotent the Mariner's Strength! They reel to and fro, and ſtagger in the jarring Hold; or cling to the Cordage, while burſting Seas foam over the Deck. *Deſpair* is in every Face, and, *Death* ſits threatening on every Surge.—But why, O ye aſtoniſhed Mariners, why ſhould you abandon yourſelves to Deſpair? Is the LORD's Hand *ſhortened*, becauſe the Waves of the Sea rage horribly? Is his Ear *deafened*, by the roaring Thunders, and the bellowing Tempeſt? Cry, Cry unto HIM, who "holdeth the Winds in his Fiſt, and the Waters in "the Hollow of his Hand." HE is all gracious, to hear; and almighty, to ſave. If HE command, the Storm ſhall be huſhed to Silence; the Billows ſhall ſubſide into a Calm: the Lightnings ſhall lay their fiery Bolts aſide: and, inſtead of ſinking in a watry Grave, you ſhall find Yourſelves brought to the deſired Haven.

SOMETIMES, after a joyleſs Day, a more diſmal *Night* ſucceeds.—The lazy, louring Vapours had wove ſo thick a Veil, as the meridian Sun could ſcarcely penetrate. What Gloom then muſt overwhelm the nocturnal Hours! the Moon withdraws her Shining. Not a ſingle

ſingle Star, is able to ſtruggle through the deep Arrangement of Shades. All is *pitchy Darkneſs*, without one enlivening Ray. How ſolemn! How awful! 'Tis like the Shroud of Nature, or the Return of Chaos. I don't wonder, that it is the Parent of Terrors, and ſo apt to ingender Melancholy.—Lately, the Tempeſt marked it's rapid Way with *Miſchief*; now, the Night dreſſes her ſilent Pavilion with *Horror*.

I HAVE *ſometimes* left the beaming Tapers, withdrawn from the ruddy Fire, and plunged into the thickeſt of theſe ſooty Shades; without regretting the Change, rather exulting in it as a welcome Deliverance. The very Gloom was pleaſing, was exhilarating, compared with the Converſation, I quitted. The Speech of my Companions (how does it grieve me, that I ſhould *even once* have Occaſion to call them by *that* Name!) was the Language of Darkneſs: was Horror to the Soul, and Torture to the Ear. —*Their Teeth were Spears and Arrows, and their Tongue a ſharp Sword*, to ſtab and aſſaſſinate their Neighbour's Character. *Their Throat was an open Sepulchre*, gaping to devour the Reputation of the Innocent, or tainting the Air with their virulent and polluted Breath. — Sometimes, their licentious and ungovernable Diſcourſe, ſhot Arrows of *Profaneneſs* againſt Heaven itſelf; and, in proud Defiance, challenged

the Reſentment of Omnipotence.—Sometimes, as if it was the Glory of human Nature, to cheriſh the *groſſeſt* Appetites of the Brute; or the Mark of a Gentleman, to have ſerved an Apprenticeſhip in a Brothel; the filthieſt Jeſts of the Stews (if low *Obſcenity* can be a Jeſt) were nauſeouſly obtruded on the Company. All the *modeſt* Part were offended and grieved; while the other beſotted Creatures laughed aloud, though the Leproſy of Uncleanneſs appeared on their Lips.—Are not theſe Perſons *Priſoners* of *Darkneſs*; though blazing Sconces, pour artificial Day, through their Rooms? Are not their Souls immured in the moſt baleful Shades; though the Noon-tide Sun is brightened, by flaming on their gilded Chariots?—They diſcern not that great and adorable Being, who fills the Univerſe with his infinite and glorious Preſence; who is *all Eye*, to obſerve their Actions; *all Ear*, to examine their Words. They know not the all-ſufficient Redeemer, nor the unſpeakable Bleſſedneſs of his heavenly Kingdom. They are groping for the Prize of Happineſs; but will certainly graſp the Thorn of Anxiety. They are wantonly ſporting on the Brink of a Precipice; and are every Moment in Danger of falling headlong, into *irretrievable* Ruin, and *endleſs* Deſpair.

THEY have forced me out, and are, perhaps, deriding me in my Abſence: are charging my Reverence for the ever-preſent GOD, and my Concern for the Dignity of our *rational* Nature, to the Account of Humour and Singularity; to Narrowneſs of Thought, or Sourneſs of Temper.—Be it ſo.—I will indulge no Indignation againſt them. If any Thing like it *ſhould* ariſe, I will convert it into Prayer—"Pity them, "O Thou Father of Mercies!—Shew them the "Madneſs of their Profaneneſs!—Shew them "the Baſeneſs of their vile Ribaldry!—Let their "diſſolute Rant be turned into ſilent Sorrow and "Confuſion. Till they open their Lips, to adore "thine *inſulted* Majeſty, and to implore thy gracious Pardon. Till they devote to thy Service, "thoſe ſocial Hours, and thoſe ſuperior Faculties, "which they are now abuſing—to the Diſhonour "of thy Name—to the Contamination of their "own Souls—and (unleſs timely Repentance in-"tervene) to their everlaſting Infamy and Per-"dition."

I RIDE home amidſt the gloomy Void. All darkling and ſolitary, I can ſcarce diſcern my Horſe's Head; and only gueſs out my blind Road. *No Companion*, but Danger; or perhaps "Deſtruction ready at my Side *."—But, why do I fanſy myſelf *ſolitary?* Is not the Father

* Job xviii. 12.

ther of Lights; the GOD of my Life; the great and everlasting Friend; always at my Right-hand? Because the Day is excluded, is his Omnipresence vacated? Though I have no earthly Acquaintance near, to assist in case of a Misfortune; or to beguile the Time, and divert uneasy Suspicions, by entertaining Conferences; may I not lay my Help upon the Almighty, and converse with GOD by humble Supplication? For this Exercise, no Place is improper; no Hour unseasonable; and no Posture incommodious. This is *Society*, the best of Society, even in Solitude. This is a Fund of Delights, easily portable, and quite inexhaustible. A *Treasure* this, of unknown Value; liable to no Hazard, from Wrong or Robbery; but perfectly secure, to the lonely Wanderer, in the most darksome Paths.

AND why should I distress myself with Apprehensions of *Peril?* This Access to GOD, is not only an indefeasible Privilege, but a kind of *ambulatory Garrison.* Those, who make known their Requests unto GOD, and rely upon his protecting Care; he gives *his Angels* Charge over their Welfare. His Angels are commissioned, to escort them in their Travelling; and to hold up their Goings, that they dash not their Foot against a Stone *. Nay, *He Himself* condescends to be their Guardian, and "keeps all "their

* Psal. xci. 11, 12.

" their Bones, ſo that not one of them is broken." —Between theſe Perſons, and the moſt miſchievous Objects, a Treaty of Peace is concluded. The Articles of this grand Alliance, are recorded in the Book of Revelation; and will, when it is for the real Benefit of Believers, aſſuredly be made good, in the Adminiſtrations of Providence. *In that Day*, ſaith the LORD, *will I make a Covenant for them with the Beaſts of the Field, and with the Fowls of Heaven, and with the creeping Things of the Ground*; and they *ſhall be in League with the Stones of the Field* *. Though they fall headlong on the Flints; even the Flints, fitted to fracture the Skull, ſhall receive them as into the Arms of Friendſhip; and not offer to hurt, whom the LORD is pleaſed to preſerve.

MAY I then enjoy the Preſence of this gracious GOD, and Darkneſs and Light ſhall be both alike. Let HIM whiſper Peace to my Conſcience; and this dread Silence ſhall be more charming, than the Voice of Eloquence, or the Strains of Muſic. Let HIM reveal his raviſhing Perfections in my Soul; and I ſhall not want the ſaffron Beauties of the Morn, the golden Glories of Noon, or the impurpled Evening Sky. I ſhall ſigh only for thoſe moſt deſirable and diſtinguiſhed Realms; where, the Light of HIS Coun-

* Job v. 23. Hoſ. ii. 18.

Countenance *perpetually* ſhines, and conſequently —" there is * no Night there."

How ſurpriſing are the Alterations of Nature! I left her, the preceding Evening, plain and unadorned. But, now, a *thick Rime* has ſhed it's hoary Honours over all. It has ſhagged the Fleeces of the Sheep, and criſped the Traveller's Locks. The Hedges are richly fringed, and all the Ground is profuſely powdered. The downward Branches are taſſeled with Silver, and the upright are feathered with the plumy Wave.

THE *Fine*, are not always the *Valuable*. The Air, amidſt all theſe gaudy Decorations, is charged with chilling and *unwholſome* Damps. The raw hazy Influence ſpreads wide; ſits deep; hangs heavy and oppreſſive on the Springs of Life. A liſtleſs Languor clogs the animal Functions; and the purple Stream glides but faintly through it's Chanels. In vain, the Ruler of the Day exerts his beaming Powers: In vain, He attempts to diſperſe this Inſurrection of Vapours. The ſullen, malignant Cloud refuſes to depart. It envelops the World, and intercepts the *Proſpect*. I look abroad for the neighbouring Village; I ſend my Eye in queſt of the riſing Turret; but am ſcarce able to diſcern the very next Houſe. Where are the blue Arches of

* Rev. xxi. 25.

Heaven? Where is the radiant Countenance of the Sun? Where the boundleſs Scenes of Creation? Loſt, loſt are their Beauties; quenched their Glories. The thronged Theatre of the Univerſe, ſeems an empty Void; and all it's elegant Pictures, an undiſtinguiſhed Blank.—Thus would it have been with our intellectual Views, if the *Goſpel* had not come in to our Relief. We ſhould have known, neither our true Good, nor real Evil. We had been a Riddle to ourſelves; the preſent State all Confuſion, and the future impenetrable Darkneſs. But, the Sun of Righteouſneſs, ariſing with potent and triumphant Beams, has diſſipated the interpoſing Cloud. Has opened a Proſpect, more beautiful, than the Bloſſoms of Spring; more chearing, than the Treaſures of Autumn; and far more inlarged, than the Extent of the viſible Syſtem. Which, having led the Eye of the Mind, through Fields of Grace, over Rivers of Righteouſneſs, and Hills crowned with Knowledge; terminates, at length, in the Heavens; ſweetly loſing itſelf, in Regions of infinite Bliſs, and endleſs Glory.

As I walk along the Fog, it ſeems, at ſome little Diſtance, to be almoſt ſolid Gloom; ſuch as would ſhut our every Glimpſe of Light, and totally impriſon me in Obſcurity. But, when I approach, and enter it; I find myſelf agreeably miſtaken, and the Miſt much *thinner*, than it *appeared*.

peared.—Such is the Caſe, with regard to the Sufferings of the preſent Life; they are not, when experienced, ſo dreadful, as a timorous Imagination ſurmiſed. Such alſo is the Caſe, with reference to the *Gratifications* of *Senſe*; they prove not, when enjoyed, ſo ſubſtantial, as a ſanguine Expectation repreſented. In both Inſtances, we are graciouſly diſappointed. The keen Edge of the Calamity is blunted, that it may not wound us with incurable Anguiſh: the exquiſite Reliſh of the Proſperity is palled, that it may not captivate our Affections, and enſlave them to inferior Delights.

SOMETIMES, the Face of Things wears a more pleaſing Form; the very Reverſe of the foregoing. The ſober Evening advances, to cloſe the ſhort-lived Day. The Firmament, clear and unſullied, puts on it's brighteſt Blue. The Stars, in thronging Multitudes, and with a peculiar Brillancy, glitter thro' the fair Expanſe. While the *Froſt* pours it's ſubtle and penetrating Influence, all around. Sharp and intenſely ſevere, all the long Night, the rigid Æther continues it's Operations. When, late and ſlow, the Morning opens her pale Eye; in what a curious and amuſing Diſguiſe is Nature dreſſed! The Icicles, jagged and uneven, are pendent on the Houſes. A whitiſh Film incruſts the Windows, where mimic Landſcapes riſe, and fanſied Figures

ſwell. The fruitful Fields are hardened to Iron; the moiſtened Meadows are congealed to Marble; and both reſound (an Effect unknown before) with the Peaſant's haſty Tread. The Stream is arreſted in it's Career, and it's ever-flowing Surface chained to the Banks. The fluid Paths become a ſolid Road; where the finny Shoals were wont to rove, the ſportive Youth ſlide, or the rattling Chariots roll *. And (what would ſeem, to an Inhabitant of the Southern World, as unaccountable as the deepeſt Myſteries of our Religion) that very ſame Breath of Heaven, which *cements* the Lakes into a cryſtal Pavement; *cleaves* the Oaks, as it were with inviſible Wedges: "*breaks* in Pieces the Northern Iron, "and the Steel;" even while it *builds* a Bridge of Icy Rock, over the Seas †.

THE Air is all Serenity. Refined by the nitrous Particles, it affords the moſt diſtinct Views, and

* *Undaque jam tergo ferratos ſuſtinet orbes,*
Puppibus illa prius patulis, nunc hoſpita plauſtris.
Æraque diſſiliunt vulgo. VIRG.

† *Job* xxxviii. 30. *The Waters are hid,* locked up from the Cattle's Lips, and ſecured from the Fiſher's Net, *as* Wells were wont to be cloſed *with a* ponderous and impenetrable *Stone. And* not only Lakes and Rivers, but *the Surface of the* great *Deep,* with it's reſtleſs and uncontroulable Surges, *is taken Captive* יתלכדו by the Froſt, and bound in ſhining Fetters.

and extenſive Proſpects. The Seeds of *Infection* are killed; and the *Peſtilence* deſtroyed, even in Embryo. So, the Cold of *Affliction* tends to mortify our Corruptions, and ſubdue our vicious Habits.—The crouding Atmoſphere conſtringes our Bodies, and braces our Nerves. The Spirits are buoyant, and ſally briſkly on the Execution of their Office. In the Summer-Months, ſuch an unclouded Sky, and ſo bright a Sun, would have melted us with Heat, and ſoftened us into Supineneſs. We ſhould have been ready to throw our Limbs under the ſpreading Beach, and to lie at Eaſe by the murmuring Brook. But, now, none loiters in his Path; none is ſeen with folded Arms. All is in Motion; all is Activity. Choice, prompted by the Weather, ſupplies the Spur of Neceſſity. Thus, the *rugged* School of Misfortune, often trains up the Mind, to a vigorous Exertion of it's Faculties. The *bleak* Climate of *Adverſity*, often inſpirits us with a manly Reſolution. When a ſoft and downy Affluence, perhaps, would have relaxed all the generous Spring of the Soul; and have left it enervated with Pleaſure, or diſſolved in Indolence.

"*COLD* cometh out of the North." The Winds, having ſwept thoſe Deſarts of Snow, arm themſelves with Millions of frozen Particles, and make a fierce Deſcent upon our Iſle. Under

black and ſcowling Clouds, they drive, dreadfully whizzing, through the darkened Air. They growl around our Houſes; aſſault our Doors; and, eager for Entrance, faſten on our Windows. Walls can ſcarce reſtrain them; Bars are unable to exclude them; through every Cranny they force their Way. Ice is on their Wings; they ſcatter Agues through the Land; and Winter, all Winter, rages as they go. Their Breath is as a ſearing * Iron to the little Verdure, left in the Plains. Vaſtly more pernicious to the tender Plants, than the ſharpeſt Knife; they kill their Branches, and wound the very Root. Let not the Corn venture to peep too freely from the Entrenchment of the Furrow; let not the fruit-bearing Bloſſoms dare to come abroad, from their Lodgment in the Bark; leſt theſe murderous Blaſts intercept and ſeize the unwary Strangers, and deſtroy the Hopes of the advancing Year.

O, 'tis ſeverely cold! Who is ſo hardy, as not to ſhrink at this *exceſſively pinching* Weather? See!

* This, I ſuppoſe, is the Meaning of that figurative Expreſſion, uſed by the Prophet *Habakkuk*; who, ſpeaking of the *Chaldæans* invading *Judæa*, ſays—*Their Faces*, or the Incurſions they make, *ſhall ſup up*, ſhall ſwallow greedily, ſhall devour utterly, the Inhabitants of the Country, and their valuable Effects; *as the* keen, corroding Blaſts of the *Eaſt Wind*, deſtroy every green Thing in the Field. *Hab.* i, 9.

See! Every Face is pale. Even the blooming Cheeks contract a gelid Hue; and the Teeth hardly forbear chattering.—Ye that ſit eaſy and joyous, amidſt your commodious Apartments, ſolacing yourſelves in the diffuſive Warmth of your Fire; be mindful of your Brethren, in the chearleſs Tenement of Poverty. *Their* ſhattered Panes are open to the piercing Winds; a tattered Garment, ſcarcely covers their ſhivering Fleſh; while a few faint and dying Embers on the ſqualid Hearth, rather mock their Wiſhes, than warm their Limbs.—While the generous Juices of *Oporto*, ſparkle in your Glaſſes; or the Streams, beautifully tinged and deliciouſly flavoured with the *Chineſe* Leaf, ſmoak in the elegant Porcelain: O remember, that many of your Fellow-Creatures, amidſt all the Rigour of theſe inclement Skies, are emaciated with Sickneſs; benumbed with Age; and pining with Hunger. Let "their Loins bleſs you," for comfortable Cloathing. Reſtore them with Medicine; regale them with Food; and baffle the raging Year. So, may you never know any of their Diſtreſſes, but only by the Hearing of the Ear; the Seeing of the Eye; or the Feeling of a tender Commiſeration!—Methinks, the bitter bluſtering Winds plead for the poor Indigents. May they breathe Pity into *your* Breaſts; while they blow Hardſhips into *their* Huts!—Obſerve thoſe

blue Flames, and ruddy Coals, in your Chimney: quickened by the Cold, they look more lively, and glow more ſtrongly. Silent, but ſeaſonable Admonition to the gay Circle, that chat and ſmile around them! *Thus*, may your Hearts, at ſuch a Juncture of Need, kindle into a peculiar Benevolence! Detain not your ſuperfluous Piles of Wood. Let them haſten to the Relief of the ſtarving Family. Bid them expire in many a willing Blaze, to mitigate the Severity of the Seaſon, and chear the bleak Abodes of Want. So ſhall they aſcend, mingled with Thankſgivings to GOD, and ardent Prayers for your Welfare—aſcend, more grateful to Heaven, than Columns of the moſt coſtly Incenſe.

Now the Winds ceaſe. Having brought their Load, they are diſmiſſed from Service. They have wafted an immenſe Cargo of Clouds, which empty themſelves in *Snow*. At firſt, a few ſcattered Shreds come wandering down the ſaddened Sky. This ſlight Skirmiſh is ſucceeded by a general Onſet. The Flakes, large, and numerous, and thick-wavering, deſcend. They dim the Air, and haſten the Approach of Night. Through all the Night, in ſofteſt Silence, and with a continual Flow, this fleecy Shower falls. In the Morning, when we awake, what a ſurpriſing Change appears!—Is this the ſame World? Here is no Diverſity of Colour! I can hardly diſtinguiſh the Trees, from the Hills on which

which they grow. Which are the Meadows, and which the Plains? Where are the green Paſtures, and where the fallow Lands? All Things lie blended in bright Confuſion. So bright, that it heightens the Splendor of Day, and even dazles the Organs of Sight.—The Lawn is not ſo fair, as this ſnowy Mantle, which inveſts the Fields; and even the Lily, was the Lily to appear, would look tarnished in it's Preſence. I can think of but *one* Thing, which *excels* or equals the glittering Robe of Winter. Is any Perſon deſirous to know my Meaning? He may find it explained in that admirable Hymn *, compoſed by the Royal Penitent. Is any deſirous to poſſeſs this matchleſs Ornament? He will find it offered to his Acceptance, in every Page of the Goſpel.

SEE! (for the Eye cannot ſatisfy itſelf, without viewing again and again the curious, the delicate Scene) See! how the Hedges are habited, like ſpotleſs Veſtals! The Houſes are rooted with Uniformity and Luſtre. The Meadows are covered with a Carpet of the fineſt Ermine †.

The

* Can any Thing be whiter than Snow? Yes, ſaith *David*; if GOD be pleaſed to waſh me from my Sins in the Blood of CHRIST, *I ſhall be even whiter than Snow.* Pſal. li. 7. See Page 145, 146

† This Animal is Milk-white. As for thoſe *black Spots*, which We generally ſee, in Linings of Ermine, they are added by the Furrier. In order to diverſify the Appearance, or heighten the Beauty, of the native Colour.

The Groves bow, beneath the lovely Burden; and all, all below, is one wide, immenſe ſhining Waſte of White.—By deep Snows, and heavy Rains, GOD *ſealeth up the Hand of every Man.* And for this Purpoſe, adds our ſacred Philoſopher, *that all Men may know his Work* *. He confines them within their Doors, and puts a Stop to their ſecular Buſineſs; that they may conſider the Things, which belong to their ſpiritual Welfare. That having a Vacation from their ordinary Employ, they may obſerve the Works of his Power, and become acquainted with the Myſteries of his Grace.

AND worthy, worthy of all Obſervation, are the Works of the great Creator. They are prodigiouſly various, and perfectly amazing. How pliant and ductile is Nature, under his forming Hand! At his Command, the ſelf-ſame Subſtance aſſumes the moſt different Shapes; and is transformed into an endleſs Multiplicity of Figures. If HE ordains, the Water is *moulded* into Hail, and diſcharged upon the Earth like a Volley of Shot; or, it is *conſolidated* into Ice, and defends the Rivers, "as it were with a "Breaſt-plate." At the bare Intimation of his Will, the very ſame Element is ſcattered in Hoar-Froſt, like a Sprinkling of the moſt *attenuated* Aſhes; or, is ſpread over the Surface of the

* Job xxxvii. 7.

the Ground, in theſe Couches of ſwelling and *flaky* Down.

THE Snow, however it may carry the Appearance of Cold, affords a *warm* Garment for the Corn; ſcreens it from nipping Froſts, and cheriſhes it's infant Growth. It will abide for a while, to exert a protecting Care, and exerciſe a foſtering Influence. Then, touched by the Sun, or thawed by a ſoftening Gale; the furry Veſture, melts into genial Moiſture; ſinks deep into the Soil, and faturates it's Pores with the diſſolving Nitre: repleniſhing the Glebe with thoſe Principles of vegetative Life, which will open into the Bloom of Spring, and ripen into the Fruits of Autumn.—Beautiful Emblem this, and comfortable Repreſentation of the Divine *Word*; both in the ſucceſsful, and advantageous Iſſue of it's Operation! *As the Rain cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the Earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater: So ſhall my Word be, that goeth forth out of my Mouth: it ſhall not return unto me void, but ſhall accompliſh that which I pleaſe, and it ſhall proſper in the Thing whereunto I ſent it* *.

NATURE, at length, puts off her lucid Veil. She drops it, in a trickling *Thaw*. The looſened Snow,

* Iſa. lv. 10, 11.

Snow, rolls in Sheets from the Houſes. Various Openings ſpot the Hills; which, even while we look, become larger, and more numerous. The Trees rid themſelves by Degrees, of the hoary Incumbrance. Shook from the ſpringing Boughs, Part falls heavy to the Ground, Part flies abroad in ſhining Atoms. Our Fields and Gardens, lately buried beneath the drifted Heaps, riſe plain and diſtinct to View.—Since we ſee Nature once again, has ſhe no verdant Traces, no beautiful Features, left? They are, like real Friends, very rare; and therefore the more particularly to be regarded, the more highly to be valued.—Here and there, the *Holly* hangs out her glowing Berries; the *Lauruſtinus* ſpreads her graceful Tufts; and both, under a Covert of unfading Foliage. —The plain, but hardy *Ivy* cloathes the decrepit, crazy Wall; nor ſhrinks from the friendly Office, tho' the Skies frown, and the Storm roars. —The *Laurel*, firm, erect, and bold, expands it's Leaf of vivid Green. In ſpite of the united, the repeated Attacks of Wind, and Rain, and Froſt, it preſerves an undiſmayed lively Look; and maintains it's Poſt, while withering Millions fall around. Worthy, by vanquiſhing the rugged Force of Winter, worthy to adorn the triumphant Conqueror's Brow.—Nor muſt I forget the *Bay-tree*; which ſcorns to be a mean Penſioner, on a few tranſient ſunny Gleams; or,

with

with a ſervile Obſequiouſneſs, to vary it's Appearance, in Conformity to the changing Seaſons. By ſuch Indications of ſterling Worth, and ſtaunch Reſolution, reading a Lecture to the Poet's Genius; while it weaves the Chaplet for his Temples.—Theſe, and a few other Plants, clad with native Verdure, retain their comely Aſpect, in the bleakeſt Climes, and in the coldeſt Months.

SUCH, and ſo durable, are the Accompliſhments of a *refined* Underſtanding, and an *amiable* Temper. The tawdry Ornaments of Dreſs, which catch the unthinking Vulgar, ſoon become inſipid and deſpicable. The rubied Lip, and the roſy Cheek fade. Even the ſparkling Wit *,

as

* " How little does God eſteem the Things that " Men count great; the Endowments of *Wit* and " Eloquence, that *Men* admire in ſome! Alas! how " poor are they to Him! He reſpecteth not any " who are wiſe in Heart: they are nothing, and " leſs than nothing, in his Eyes. Even *wiſe* Men " admire, how little it is that Men know; how " ſmall a Matter lies under the Sound of theſe " popular Wonders, a learned Man, a great Scholar, " a great Stateſman. How much more doth the " all-wiſe GOD meanly account of Theſe! He often " diſcovers, even to the World, their Meanneſs. " He *befools* them. So Valour, or Birth, or worldly " Greatneſs, theſe He gives, and gives as Things " He makes no great Reckoning of, to ſuch as ſhall " never ſee his Face; and calls to the Inheritance of " Glory

as well as the ſparkling Eye, pleaſe but for a Moment. But the virtuous Mind has Charms, which ſurvive the Decay of every inferior Embelliſhment. Charms, which add to the Fragrancy of the Flower, the *Permanency* of the *Ever-green*.

SUCH, likewiſe, is the Happineſs of the ſincerely Religious; like a Tree, ſays the inſpired Moraliſt, "whoſe Leaf ſhall not fall." He borrows not his Peace from external Circumſtances; but has a Fund within, and is "ſatisfied from "himſelf *." Even though impoveriſhed by calamitous Accidents; He is rich in the *Poſſeſſion* of *Grace*, and richer in the *Hope* of *Glory*. His Joys are infinitely ſuperior to, as well as nobly independent on, the tranſitory Glow of ſenſual Delight, or the capricious Favours of, what the World calls, Fortune.

IF

"Glory poor deſpiſed Creatures, that are looked on "as the *Off-ſcourings*, and *Refuſe* of the World."

—*THUS* ſays an excellent Author; who writes with the moſt amiable Spirit of Benevolence; with the moſt unaffected Air of Humility; and like the ſacred Originals, from which he copies, with a majeſtic Simplicity of Stile.—Whoſe *ſelect Works* I may venture to recommend, not only as a Treaſure, but as a MINE of genuine, ſterling, evangelical Piety.—See Page 520 of Archbiſhop LEIGHTON's *ſelect Works*, the *Edinburgh* Edition, Octavo. Which it is neceſſary to ſpecify, becauſe the *London* Edition does not contain that Part of his Writings, which has ſupplied me with the preceding *Quotation*.

* Prov. xiv. 14.

If the *Snow* compoſes the light-armed Troops of the Sky; methinks, the *Hail* conſtitutes it's heavy Artillery *. When driven be a vehement Wind, with what dreadful Impetuoſity, does that ſtony Shower fall! How it rebounds from the frozen Ground, and rattles on the reſounding Dome! It attenuates the Rivers into Smoke, or ſcourges them into Foam. It cruſhes the infant Flowers; cuts in Pieces the Gardener's early Plants; and batters the feeble Fortification of his Glaſſes into Shivers. It darts into the Traveller's Face: He turns, with Haſte, from the Stroke; or feels, on his Cheek, for the guſhing Blood. If he would retreat into the Houſe, it follows him even thither; and, like a determined Enemy, that puſhes the Purſuit, daſhes through the crackling Panes.—But the fierce Attack is quickly over. The Clouds have ſoon ſpent their Shafts; ſoon unſtrung their Bow. Happy for the Inhabitants of the Earth, that a Sally ſo dreadfully *furious*, ſhould be ſo remarkably *ſhort!* What elſe could endure the Shock, or eſcape Deſtruction?

But,

* *He caſteth forth his Ice like Morſels.* Pſal. cxlvii. 17. Which, in modern Language, might be thus expreſſed: *He poureth his Hail like a Volley of Shot.* The Word פתים, inadequately tranſlated *Morſels*, alludes I think, to thoſe *Fragments* of the Rock, or thoſe *ſmooth Stones* from the Brook, which in the Day of Battle, the Warriors hurled from their Slings.

BUT, behold a *Bow*, of no hoſtile Intention! A Bow, painted in variegated Colours, on the diſburdened Cloud. How vaſt is the Extent, how delicate the Texture, of that *ſhowery Arch!* It compaſſeth the Heavens, with a glorious Circle; and teaches us to forget the Horrors of the Storm. Elegant it's Form, and rich it's Tincture; but, more delightful it's ſacred Significancy. While the Violet and the Roſe, bluſh in it's beautiful Aſpect; the Olive-branch ſmiles in it's gracious Import. It writes, in radiant Dyes, what the Angels ſung in harmonious Strains; "Peace on "Earth, and Good will towards Men." It is the Stamp of *Inſurance*, for the Continuance of Seed-Time, and Harveſt; for the Preſervation and Security of the viſible World *. It is the comfortable *Token* †, of a better State, and a happier Kingdom—a Kingdom, where Sin ſhall ceaſe, and Miſery be aboliſhed; where Storms ſhall beat, and Winter pierce no more; but Holineſs, Happineſs, and Joy, like one unbounded *Spring*, for ever, ever bloom.

* Gen. ix. 12—16 † Rev. iv. 3.

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TABLE

OF THE

TEXTS

More or *leſs* illuſtrated in this WORK.

N. B. *As Dr.* SHAW, *in the Supplement to his* Excellent *Book of Travels, and ſeveral other Authors of the* greateſt *Eminence, have given an Index of Scriptures, occaſionally Explained in their Writings; I doubt not, but I ſhall oblige* many *of my Readers, by what I* here *ſubjoin; thoſe eſpecially, whoſe Taſte is happily formed to reliſh the Beauties of the ſacred Records.*

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